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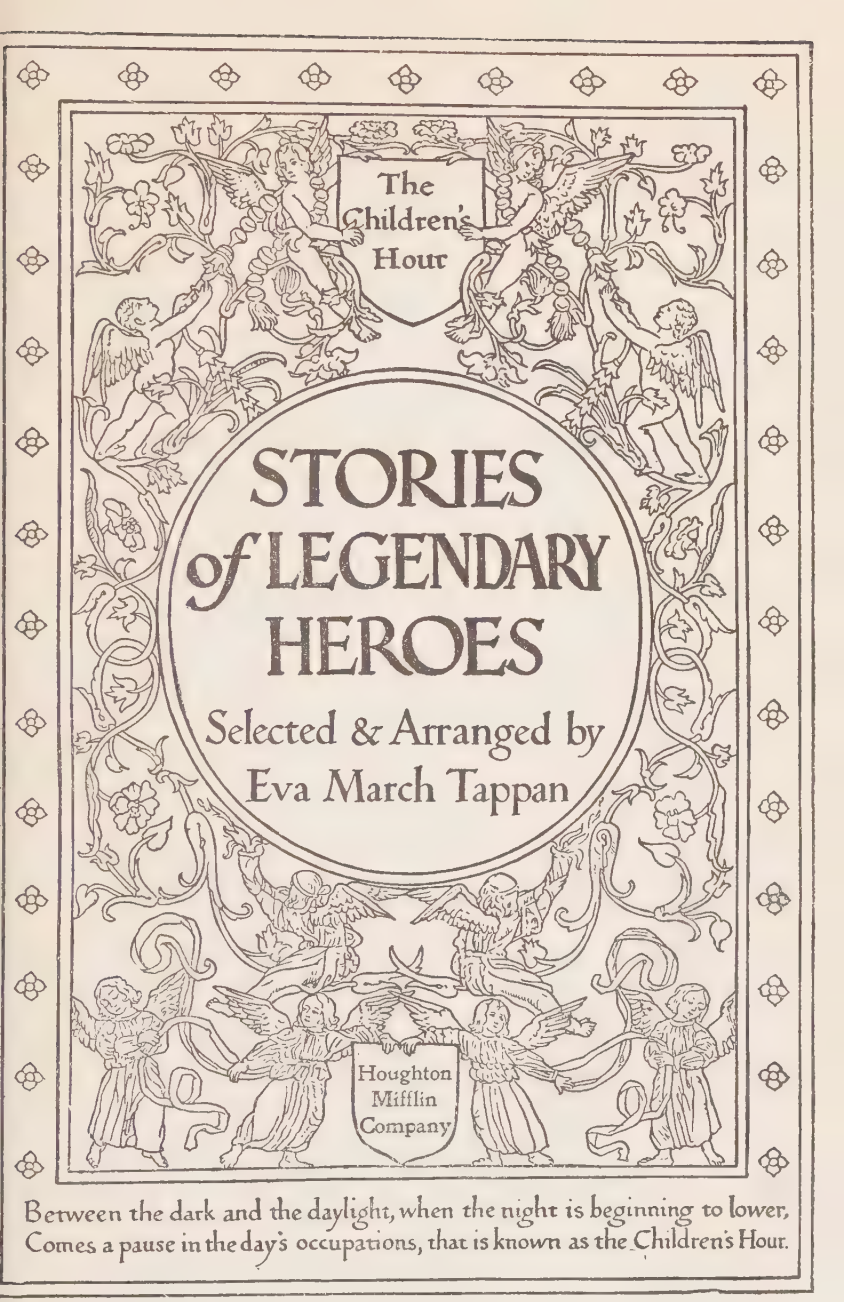
THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

IN FIFTEEN VOLUMES

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME IV

Sir Galahad (page 54)



Between the dark and the daylight, when the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations, that is known as the Children's Hour.

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TO THE CHILDREN

IF you had landed on the shores of the North Sea fourteen or fifteen centuries ago, the sea guard would have come galloping down to the beach on his horse. He would have shaken his mighty spear and demanded, "Who are you? Where do you come from? Are you false spies come to search out our country? Do you mean peace or war?" If you had shown him that you were friends, he would have said, "Come to the hall where my lord abides. I will guide you, and my men shall watch over your vessel until your return."

Just imagine that you are walking up the road after the sea guard. You wear coats of mail, of course, made of rings closely interwoven. You have spears and bucklers and helmets and swords and battle-axes. They ring and clink and flash in the sunshine, as you march up the rough pathway. At last you come to a long building, where the lord of the land makes his home. As the guard leads you in, you see shields leaning against the walls and spears clustered in the corners. You see a row of stone hearths running up the middle of the hall. On the hearths are blazing fires, where great joints of meat are roasting. Along the sides of the hall are little alcoves, where the thanes, or followers of the lord, sleep. The guard leads you to the farther end of the room, where there is a raised platform, and presents you to his lord. The lord makes sure that you have come as

friends, and then he asks you to join in the feasting. Great quantities of meat are eaten, and mighty drinking cups of mead are emptied over and over. Then the gleeman takes his harp and sings of some heroic deeds of old. If there has been a battle not long before, there are treasures to be divided; helmets, banners, horses and trappings, swords, spears, jeweled collars, and heavy rings of silver and of gold. The wife of the lord is present in her golden diadem and her richest robes; and she, too, makes gifts to the men whom her lord most delights to honor.

Such feasts as these were among the greatest pleasures of our ancestors. The men who received the gifts were always those who had been brave in battle, those who had risked their lives to defend their lord or to win treasures for their people. As the years passed, the gleemen began to sing songs of their courageous deeds. By and by, most of the names were forgotten, and the brave acts were all told as if they had been the work of some one hero. They grew bigger and bigger whenever they were sung. If a man had killed a bear, the song was likely to have it that he had overcome a giant. If he had killed a serpent, the serpent was sure to appear in the song as a dragon, then as a fire-breathing dragon; and so the stories increased.

Thus it was that the story of Beowulf grew. When the people who lived about the North Sea came over to England, they still sang the old hero songs. A little while ago, a thousand years or more, some one put these songs together and gave us the poem *Beowulf* as we now have it.

TO THE CHILDREN

Almost every nation has at least one hero of the olden time. The English have Beowulf, Arthur, and Robin Hood; the French have Charlemagne and his knights; the Spanish, the Cid; the Germans, Siegfried; the Scandinavians, Frithiof. Of course, people's notions of what makes a great man have changed a good deal since the early days. When we hear that a man is a hero, we do not ask now, "How many dragons has he killed?" or, "Did he ever dive to the bottom of the ocean to do battle with a sea-monster?" We expect our heroes of to-day to perform quite different exploits from these; but in several respects they and the noblest champions of old are alike; they are fearless in war, gentle in peace, kind to those who are in need of help, faithful to those to whom they owe allegiance, and they are ever sincere, upright, honorable, truthful, and unselfish.

HEROES OF THE BRITISH ISLES

BEOWULF

By John Gibb

THE land of the Danes was without a king. And there was confusion and disorder in all the land. Every one did what was right in his own eyes, for there was none to bear rule.

It happened at this time that there came a single ship to the land from across the waves. The people went on board the ship, and behold, there were no sailors, and no men in armor in the ship. No living thing was to be seen in it, save one little boy lying beside the mast. Around him were laid many precious treasures, rich coats of mail, shields and swords, and gold and precious stones. The men wondered when they saw the child and all the rich treasures which lay around him. But one said, —

"Surely the gods have sent this babe to our kingless land, that he might become our king."

The others hearkened to the voice of him who thus spake, and they made the child king of the Danes, and his name was called Scyld. He grew to man's estate, and became a mighty king, and subdued the peoples under him. All the neighboring peoples across the whale roads obeyed Scyld, the king of the Danes, and paid him tribute. He gave many gifts to his own people, and he was loved by them; and when an heir

was born in his hall, all were willing that he should sit upon his father's throne, and that the Scyldings should rule over them forever.

Scyld himself became a very old man, and the time drew near for his departure into the peace of the Lord. Then said he to his comrades before he died, —

"When I am dead, place my body upon a ship, and send me forth on the sea even as I came."

The comrades of Scyld hearkened to the words of their king, and when he died they bore his body to the shore, where the ship was waiting. They laid the old king in the middle of the ship beside the mast, and upon his heart they placed a multitude of precious things. The ship itself they adorned with weapons of war, with coats of mail, and with all that became a warrior's bier. For they said, —

"It is not fitting that he, our king, should now go forth laden with less wealth than when he came to us, a solitary child."

The winds wafted the ship out to sea. It vanished in the distance, and none ever knew whither it bore the body of the king.

After the death of Scyld, his son reigned in his stead.

Now Hrothgar was king of the Danes, and he was of the race of Scyld, the king who came alone in the ship to the land. Hrothgar was brave in battle, and he gained many victories over his enemies. His people loved him, for he often sat upon the gift-throne, and gave away rings and other presents to his people.

Now it came to pass when Hrothgar was an old man, the thought entered into his heart to build a mighty

house, in which to sit and drink the mead with his thanes, and where he might set up his gift-throne.

When the work was finished, all men admired it, and it was spoken of in many lands as the greatest palace in all the earth. The king gave to it the name of Heorot or the Stag, because its top was covered with pinnacles as the head of a stag with horns.

In Heorot sat the king upon his gift-throne, and from it he distributed to his heroes the wealth which God had given him. He was willing to give everything, this good king, except land and the lives of men; for these, he said, belonged to no one. Often did he feast with his heroes in Heorot; and in the evenings when it was dark outside, one could hear the noise of those feasting, the glad voice of singing, and the sound of the harp issuing forth from Heorot.

These sounds of mirth reached the ear of Grendel, and he was envious and sore displeased. Now Grendel was a wicked creature, who wandered about among the fens and moors, and dwelt in the dark waters. He was of the race of Cain, and was an enemy of God, and of all men that dwelt upon earth.

It came into the heart of Grendel to silence the voice of mirth and gladness in Heorot, and to turn it into mourning. He went to the hall under cover of the dark night. The heroes were lying in the hall fast asleep, for the feasting was at an end for the night. The fierce monster entered, and he seized thirty of the sleeping thanes and dragged them away with him. In vain did they struggle to escape his loathsome grip. He went away, carrying with him the dead bodies of those whom

he had slain. Then was there joy in his evil heart, because of the ruin which he had wrought.

Great was the lamentation when morning came, and it was known what Grendel had done in the night. The old king was sorely afflicted, and sat in sorrow. Next night Grendel returned to the hall, and again carried off thanes to his den; and this he continued to do night after night, until the hall stood empty, for none feasted in it any longer. Yet Grendel never approached the gift-throne where Hrothgar sat; for this the Creator forbade, who wished not that evil should befall the king. But he wandered through the land under cover of the night, and wherever he found one in lone places on the misty moors, he seized him and dragged him to his den. Many a tired warrior and brave young man disappeared, and no one ever saw them again.

For many years Grendel went throughout the land, destroying the great and the lowly, the old and the young, among the Danes. The king and his counselors were filled with grief and perplexity. Often they took counsel together, but they knew not how to deliver the land from this destroyer who walked in the darkness. They went to the temples, and with many words besought the Destroying Spirit to save them. They prayed to the Destroying Spirit, for they were heathen, and they were ignorant of the Lord God their Creator. They knew not how to honor and serve Him.

It came to the ears of Beowulf, in Gotland, what deeds Grendel had done in the land of the Danes, and how he had filled the land with lamentation and mourning.

Now Beowulf was a thane of Hygelac, the king of the Geatas. There was none like unto him for strength and for valor in all the land. And when Beowulf heard of the sorrow of Hrothgar, he said, —

"Make ready for me a good sea-boat. I will go across the swan's path to the help of the noble prince who is in need of me."

The Geatas loved Beowulf, but they did not seek to dissuade him. They knew that he was a strong hero, who had done many mighty deeds, and they said, —

"Of a surety Beowulf will deliver the king of the Danes."

Beowulf then chose fourteen fighting men as his comrades in the adventure. Soon their ship floated on the waves, and the sailors climbed up its sides. The bright armor was taken on board, and the ship was shoved forth from the land.

Wafted by the wind, the ship passed over the waves like a swift bird. On the next morning the sailors looked forth, and behold, steep mountains and white cliffs glittering in the sunlight. They knew that they had reached the land of the Danes, and they guided the ship to the shore. They brought forth their coats of mail from the bottom of the ship, and they clad themselves in armor. They stepped forth upon the sands, and tied their ship to the land.

The warder of the land, whose duty it was to watch the cliffs lest any enemy should approach, saw the mailed warriors come on shore. He tarried not, but rode to the shore to learn who they were. As soon as he met them he spake, saying, —

"Make your names known to me quickly, bold men, who have come to this Danish land. I am here to see that none do mischief. Never saw I a form so mighty as that of the earl who leads you. He is not one, I suppose, who stays at home, but one who loves to travel in search of adventures. I must know who you all are, and whence you come, before you leave the shore."

Beowulf answered and said, "We are of the people of the Geatas, and subjects of Hygelac, king of Gotland. My father's name was Ecgtheow, a prince who was well known in many lands. We have come from our own land to render help to the lord of the Danes. For it has come to our ears what things the land is suffering through Grendel, and what he has done in the dark nights."

The warder answered, "If you come as friends to the lord of the Danes, I will be your guide to him. And I will command my comrades to guard your ship, that no one injure it in your absence."

The warder then led the Geatas towards the great hall in which King Hrothgar dwelt. When they saw it they wondered greatly, for never had their eyes seen a palace so splendid before. As soon as they were in sight of it, the warder turned his horse's head, and bade them farewell, saying, —

"May God Almighty guard you. It is time for me to go. I must return to the shore to keep watch against the enemy."

The Geatas laid their shields against the wall of the palace, and they piled their ashen spears together in a sheaf. They entered the hall. Straightway one of

"MAKE YOUR NAMES KNOWN TO ME QUICKLY, BOLD MEN"

King Hrothgar's warriors, named Wulfgar, came to them and said, —

"Whence come you, men of war, clad in shirts of iron, and with weapons of war in your hands? You are no exiles, but men seeking for adventures."

Beowulf answered, "We are comrades of Hygelac, king of Gotland. My name is Beowulf. I would speak with your King Hrothgar."

Wulfgar went to seek King Hrothgar, and he found the old gray-headed man sitting among his earls. He addressed him, saying, —

"There have come strangers to our land from a far country. They are called Geatas, and their leader is one named Beowulf. He desires to speak with thee. I counsel thee, O King, not to refuse his petition, for he and his followers look like earls in their splendid war-shirts."

Then Hrothgar said, "Has Beowulf come thither? I knew him as a boy, and I have since heard of him oftentimes. Men say that there is the strength of thirty men in the grip of his fist. The holy God has surely sent him to help us against Grendel. Tell him to come quickly into our presence, and say to him that he is right welcome."

Wulfgar reported the words of King Hrothgar to Beowulf and to his companions. He said to them, —

"You may enter the presence of the king clad in your shirts of war, but leave behind here, I pray you, your shields and spears."

The chieftain of the Geatas arose and followed Wulfgar into the presence of the king of the Danes.

His followers went along with him, save those he left behind to guard the shields and spears.

The heroes entered the hall of Heorot, where upon a lofty seat sat Hrothgar ready to receive them. Beowulf spake and said, —

"Hail to thee, Hrothgar, king of the Danes! I am the kinsman and the thane of Hygelac, king of the Geatas. The deeds of Grendel became known to me when I was dwelling at home, and wise men counseled me to go to your help. I am strong, and have done many mighty deeds. It was I that destroyed the Jotuns, and who slew the Nicors by night. Alone will I meet this wretch Grendel. I ask this one favor of thee, O King, that thou wilt commit to me and to my companions the task of cleansing Heorot from the foul foe."

Hrothgar answered and said, "Thou hast come as a defense to my land, Beowulf. I am filled with sorrow and shame. Grendel has robbed me of my warriors, and no one dare any more tarry in Heorot after the light of the sun departs. Thou art welcome, since thou hast come to meet the destroyer. Sit down on the benches of the hall, and join in our feasting before thou goest to encounter the enemy."

A bench was cleared in the hall for Beowulf and for his companions, and they sat down and drank the bright ale which was poured out for them from the flagon. A bard raised his voice and sang with a clear voice, and all the warriors rejoiced together, and there was great gladness throughout the hall.

But Hunferth, the son of Ecglaf, who sat at the feet

of King Hrothgar, was displeased. He was grieved that any hero should come to the land boasting that he could do what no one among the Danes could do. He said scornfully to Beowulf, —

"Tell me, art thou the Beowulf whom Breca overcame in a swimming match? I heard the tale. You both ventured out like foolish men among the waves in the days of winter. For seven nights you swam together, but Breca was the stronger. Thou wilt have a worse defeat shouldst thou venture to meet Grendel in the darkness of the night."

Beowulf answered and said, "Hunferth, my friend, thou hast drunken too much beer. Breca never overcame me in swimming, nor did any one. But if thou wouldst hear the tale, thou shalt have it. Breca and I were boys at the time, and we swam out on the wintry sea, with naked swords in our hands to defend ourselves against the sea monsters. For five nights we were together upon the waves, and he could not pass me. The cold north wind blew, and there came a great storm upon the sea, and we were parted. In the darkness there came up from the bottom of the sea one of the monsters that dwell there, and it seized me and dragged me down into the deep waters. The coat of mail which I wore protected me, and I stabbed the wretch with my sword. But a great multitude of other sea monsters set upon me while I was at the bottom of the sea. I stabbed them all with my sword. When it became morning, and the sun rose, they were all washed ashore by the waves, and lay dead upon the sands. My sword had put them to sleep. Never afterwards

did they hinder the sailors on their course. Afterwards I continued my journey, although I was wearied, and at length the waves cast me upon the land of the Finns. I never heard that thou didst deeds such as these, Hunferth, nor Breca either. Thou didst slay thy own brothers, I know, for which thou shalt suffer the vengeance of Heaven. Hadst thou been such a hero as thou vauntest thyself, Grendel would not have laid waste the hall of thy lord. But I, a Geat, will soon show what a brave man can do, and all men will sit down cheerfully to the mead benches in this hall when they hear that Grendel is dead."

Hrothgar was well pleased when he heard the bold words of Beowulf, for the shepherd of the Danes put confidence in his promise.

Then entered the hall Waltheow, Hrothgar's queen; and she took the beer cup in her hand, and handed it first to the king, who drank of it joyfully; then she passed it round among the other heroes. She offered it also to Beowulf. He took it from her hand and drank, saying, —

"I came to thy land to do a deed of might in thy hall. To-night I shall surely finish it or end my life."

Hrothgar now rose from his seat to go to rest for the night. All the other Danes rose to go with him. Before he left he addressed Beowulf, saying, —

"Never did I before intrust this royal house to the keeping of a stranger. Guard it well. Be wakeful. Quit thee like a man. Farewell."

There were now none left in Heorot save Beowulf and his companions. Beowulf took off his coat of mail and

gave it to his attendant. He gave to him also his sword and his shield, saying to him, —

"I will not meet Grendel with weapons of war, for he knows not how to use them."

He then laid himself down upon a bench, and placed his head upon the bolster. The other Danes did the same.

Meanwhile Grendel was coming up from the misty moors to work ruin. When he reached Heorot he found the doors closed. They were fastened with bars of iron. He tore them open with his great strength, and entered the hall. He pressed forward quickly to the place where the heroes lay. From his eyes there issued forth in the darkness a light like unto fire. He saw the warriors lying asleep, and he laughed in his wicked heart, for he promised himself a feast. He seized the nearest sleeping warrior and tore him to pieces. Bit by bit he devoured his flesh and drank his blood. He then advanced towards Beowulf. The hero was watching him. Raising himself up from his couch, and leaning upon his arm, he seized the hand of Grendel. Never before had Grendel felt a grip so terrible. Fear took hold of him, and he turned to flee. But Beowulf rose to his feet, and held him fast in his grasp of iron. Terrible was the struggle between Grendel and Beowulf. The hall shook with it, the ale was spilt, and all the benches fell. The Geatas awoke from their slumber; they drew their swords and hastened to the help of their lord, but no steel, however sharp, could pierce the hide of Grendel. Presently there was heard a wild yell of pain throughout the hall, and

Grendel fled away, having escaped the grasp of Beowulf; but when the heroes looked, behold, the arm and hand of Grendel were in Beowulf's hand. It was torn from his shoulder. Sore wounded and sick unto death, the evil monster hastened to the dark pool among the fens where he had his dwelling-place.

In the morning the Danish warriors came in crowds to the gift-hall to Heorot, to learn what had happened in the darkness. Right glad they were to hear the tale of the Geatas. Some mounted their horses and followed the traces of Grendel. They rode to the dark pool where he dwelt. The dark waves were disturbed, and colored with blood, and they said one to another, —

"Grendel has breathed out his heathen soul."

They rode back joyfully. Sometimes they ran races. They talked of the brave deed and of Beowulf; and one of the king's thanes, who had a store of such, told stories of great deeds that were wrought by other heroes in olden times.

Then was told to Hrothgar what had taken place, and he went into the hall. He lifted up his eyes towards the high golden roof, and behold, as a trophy of the fight, there hung the arm of Grendel.

The king was glad, and he said to Beowulf, "Thou hast done a deed which all the might and wisdom of man was not able to accomplish. The mother who bore thee may well be proud of thee, Beowulf. Best of men, I love thee as my son. Ask what thou wilt of me, and I will give it. There is nothing I am not willing to give thee."

Beowulf replied, "Willingly have I served thee in

this matter, O King. Would that I had been able to hinder Grendel from going away! But the wretch will not live much longer. Pain will hold him in its deadly grasp until he dies in his den. It is the doom which the pure Creator has appointed for him on account of his crimes."

All looked with wonder upon the hand of Grendel aloft upon the roof. The nails on the fingers were hard as steel. Hunferth, the son of Ecglaf, was silent as he gazed on that hand. By the commandment of the king, Heorot was made ready, for he desired to give a great feast because of the victory of Beowulf. The hall was much shaken and broken, and had it not been for the iron bolts by which it was fastened, it would have fallen when Beowulf and Grendel strove together.

Now were the walls adorned with fair cloth of gold, and with many ornaments. The warriors entered in crowds to the feast, and sat down together on the benches. All gazed on Beowulf, and talked of his mighty deeds. The king brought forth his best gifts, and bestowed them upon the hero. The queen, too, did not forget to reward him. She gave him precious raiment, and she hung around his neck a collar of gold, saying, —

"Receive and wear, dear Beowulf, this collar of gold. Wear this raiment which I give to thee. May all young men follow thy example! Thou shalt be held in honor as long as thou livest for what thou hast done."

The song was sung and the tale was often told within the hall that evening, and the heroes were joyful together.

At length the hall was cleared of the ale benches, and beds and bolsters were spread upon the floor. The heroes desired to spend the night there. They feared Grendel no longer.

But Beowulf did not remain in the hall, because another lodging was made ready for him.

They sank to sleep weary with feasting, and no care or fear kept them awake. But one there paid dearly for his slumber. Grendel's avenger was near. His mother, a wretched woman of the race of Cain, came up from the cold streams in which she dwelt towards Heorot. She burst into the hall among the sleeping Danes. She was in haste, for her heart was less bold than Grendel's, and she wished to escape quickly. She seized that one of the heroes who lay nearest to her, and hastened away with him to the fens. He whom she seized was Æschere, the well-beloved counselor of Hrothgar.

In the morning there was again loud lamentation in Heorot, and in all the dwellings of the Danes, when it was known that Æschere was dead. The old king was greatly troubled in mind, and he sent for Beowulf. And when Beowulf came the king said to him, —

"Sorrow has again fallen upon the Danes. Æschere is dead — he who knew all the secrets of my heart, and who always stood by me in the day of battle."

Beowulf said, "By whom was the deed done, O King?"

Hrothgar answered, "I know who the fiend is, for I have heard men say that often when it was getting dark two forms were seen upon the misty moors. The one

was like unto a man, only of larger form — that was Grendel; the other like unto a wretched woman. She was his mother, and has done the deed. I know their home. It is not more than a mile distant. It is in a dark lake overshadowed by trees. Into that lake the stag will not plunge, even although the hounds are close upon it, so fearful and unholy is the place. Thou art brave and strong, Beowulf; go to the place and seek the hateful being who has wrought the evil. If thou dost succeed, rich shall be thy reward."

Beowulf answered the king, and said, "Grieve not, O wise King. It is better to avenge a friend than to grieve for him. The end of life comes to us all. But while we live we must do brave deeds and execute justice. This is best for those who will come after. Arise quickly, O King, and let us go and search for Grendel's mother. I promise thee she shall not escape me, although she takes refuge in the dark wood or in the deep waters."

The old king arose from his seat when he heard the words of Beowulf, and gave thanks to God. He shouted to his attendants, —

"Bring forth my horse quickly."

Hrothgar's horse was brought forth ready bridled. He mounted and set out along with Beowulf and a company of chosen men. They traced the footsteps of the evil being through the forest walks and across the dark moor. By a lonely path they found their way to the lake where the evil ones dwelt. Lying upon a rock they found the head of Æschere. They sat down and watched the water. They could see that it was mingled

with blood. And they saw swimming in the water many hideous snakes, and sea-dragons of hideous form. On the rock near were other monsters lying. When these heard the sound of the horns of Hrothgar's men, they darted into the waters. But one of the Geatas took his bow and shot forth an arrow, which struck one of the creatures and wounded it. They dragged it out with a hook, and all looked with wonder on the hideous beast. Beowulf now prepared to explore the waters. He put on his shirt of mail. Upon his head he placed his helmet. In his hand he took the good sword Hrunting. Now Hrunting was the sword of Hunferth, the son of Ecglaf, the same who, drunken with beer, spake proud words to Beowulf. But Hunferth remembered not his former enmity, and lent his sword Hrunting to Beowulf as to a better warrior. When he was armed, Beowulf spake to Hrothgar and said, —

"Wise Prince, I am now ready for my journey. Thou didst promise to be a father unto me, and I beseech thee to protect my thanes should death snatch me away. Send to my Lord Hygelac all the gold and the rich gifts which thou gavest me, that he may know that I found in thee a generous giver."

Having said these words, Beowulf plunged into the water and disappeared among the dark waves. It was long till he found the bottom, so deep did it lie. Soon Grendel's mother discovered that a man had invaded her dark abode. She rushed upon him to destroy him. She took him in her fierce grasp, but the mail-shirt resisted her fingers, and she could not pierce his body. Then she dragged him along to her den. He looked

up, and behold, a light as of fire shining above, and he could see the roof and all that was within the den. He grasped his sword, and rushing at the she-wolf, he sought to run her through the body. But the good sword Hrunting could not pierce her skin. Beowulf then grasped her by the shoulder, and sought to overthrow her. And they struggled for life and death within the den. At length Beowulf threw her down, but soon she rose again, and seizing him with a terrible grip, she cast him upon the floor of the den. Then she placed her knee upon his breast, and taking a knife from her bosom she sought to stab him. But the mail-shirt of Beowulf stopped the knife. By the protection of God was he saved, and he threw the fierce woman off, and rose again to his feet.

Beowulf looked round the den, and behold, he saw hanging upon the wall an ancient sword. It was a sword that had belonged to the giants of old — a mighty blade, and strong to smite. He reached forth his hand and seized it, for he thought that he would once more strike for his life. He then smote the woman heavily upon the neck, and it spouted out blood, and she sank dead upon the floor. Beowulf looked at his bloody sword, and at the deed which he had done, and he rejoiced greatly.

After the fight was over Beowulf looked round the cave, and behold, lying in a corner he observed the dead body of Grendel. He went up to it, and with a blow he separated the head from the body, for he wished to bear it to Hrothgar, that he might look upon the head of his enemy. But afterwards the blade of the old sword

with which he had conquered his enemy began to melt away. Like ice in heat the blade melted away, for the poisoned blood of Grendel destroyed it. Nothing but the hilt remained in Beowulf's hand.

Meanwhile Hrothgar and his men were gazing earnestly on the water where Beowulf had vanished. They saw blood mingling with the bubbling waters, and they feared, and said one to another, —

"Alas! the water-wolf has destroyed the brave chief. We shall never look on him again."

After long waiting, Hrothgar and his Danes left the place and turned their steps homeward. Hrothgar was sick at heart and very sorrowful. But the Geatas still waited on beside the water, for they were loath to give up hope. After long watching, their eyes were gladdened by the sight of Beowulf swimming as a stout swimmer towards the land. He bore with him the mighty head of Grendel and the hilt of the old sword. His thanes gathered round him rejoicing, and they thanked God for his safety.

Four men took the head of Grendel, and placing it upon a stake, they bore the huge weight along. All went joyfully towards Heorot. And they bore Grendel's head into the hall, where the thanes were sitting drinking the ale. How greatly they all wondered when they saw the fearful sight!

Beowulf approached King Hrothgar and said, "I have brought to thee, O King, a trophy of the fight. It almost cost me my life, but I escaped. God was my protector. It was not with Hrunting that I did the deed, but with this old sword whose hilt is in my hand."

Hrothgar took the hilt of the old sword from the hand of Beowulf to examine it. He saw that there were ancient letters inscribed upon it telling of old strifes. It had belonged to the giants whom God destroyed in the flood.

Hrothgar then addressed Beowulf, saying, "Beowulf, God has given to thee high prosperity. Many winters have taught me wisdom. Refuse not, therefore, to listen to an old man's counsel. There was once a king in this land who was prosperous above all that went before him. But pride lifted him up, and he oppressed the Danes, the companions who sat with him at the board. He gave not rings according to justice, but with greedy soul kept all for himself. He brought disaster upon the land and upon himself. I have told this tale for thy learning. Be thou generous. Let not conscience, the soul's shepherd, sleep within thee, but watch against pride, and against the evil spirit. Now is the day of thy power, but forget not God, the Ruler of glory, and the eternal counsel. For death will soon come to thee, as to all men."

The king then asked Beowulf to go to his seat and join in the feast. It continued until night came, when all retired to rest.

Next morning Beowulf said, "I must now return to my own lord, King Hygelac. Let our ship be made ready."

He restored to Hunferth the sword Hrunting, saying, "It is a right good blade, a friend in battle."

He said not to him that it had failed in the fight with Grendel's mother, for Beowulf was a high-souled chief.

To Hrothgar Beowulf said, "Well hast thou entertained us, O King, and we shall not forget thy goodness. Should it ever come to my ears that thou hast need of my help, I will come quickly, with a thousand thanes behind me."

Hrothgar replied, "Beowulf, thou art mighty in deed and in word. There is none like unto thee among the heroes. None can discourse so wisely, and do such deeds as thou canst. Should sword or poison take away the life of thy Lord Hygelac, the youthful shepherd of the Geatas, they will not easily find a better king than thee."

Hrothgar gave to Beowulf many costly gifts as a reward for the services which he had done to the Danes. He then embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they both wept, the old white-haired king and the young hero.

Beowulf then went to his ship, and his men with him. They took on board all the costly gifts of Hrothgar. They spread the sail from the mast, and the ship bounded through the waves, until it reached again the land of the Geatas.

Hygelac was glad to see his kinsman Beowulf return. He and his men were soon sitting at Hygelac's table, for so the king willed it. And the king said, —

"What adventures didst thou meet with, dear Beowulf, in the land of the Danes? It was against my will that thou wentest thither, for I thought it right that the Danes should fight their own battle with Grendel. But I give thanks to God that thou art returned safe and sound."

Beowulf told the king how he slew first Grendel and afterwards Grendel's mother. And all wondered; and there was a great feast, and much rejoicing and singing of songs among the guests. Hygelac's young queen, Hygd, entered the hall, and with her own hand bestowed gifts upon the heroes, and handed to them cups of ale. And Beowulf gave to his King Hygelac of the treasures which Hrothgar had given him. And on Hygd he also bestowed a gift, which he had brought from the land of the Danes, — a rich ornament of gold wrought by a very cunning workman.

It came to pass that after this Beowulf remained at home, by the side of his king and kinsman, Hygelac. But it entered into the mind of Hygelac to invade the land of the Frisians. He was wroth with them, and he desired to carry away much booty from their land. He went thither in many ships; but the people of the land and other peoples went up against him, and there was a great battle. And the Geatas were vanquished, and their King Hygelac was slain. And the enemy stripped him of his armor. But Beowulf they were not able to slay, for he fought his way through their ranks until he reached the water, and he swam back to his own land.

There was weeping and wailing in the land when it was known that King Hygelac was defeated and slain.

When Hygd, the queen of Hygelac, heard that her husband was dead, she said to Beowulf, —

"Be thou king in this land; for my son Heardred is but a child, and cannot rule over this great people."

But Beowulf said, "Not so. It shall never be said that I robbed my lord's son of his crown and his inher-

itance. But I will stand by him, and guard him, and counsel him, until he grows to man's estate."

This Beowulf did.

After the young king was grown to be a man, and was ruling over the Geatas, he was slain at a banquet by the stroke of a sword by one who bore him hatred.

On the death of King Heardred, Beowulf was chosen king of the Geatas, and for many winters he ruled in the land. Although he fought many battles, and made many wars, yet was his life preserved until he was an aged man.

In the old age of Beowulf there came a great terror in the land. There was an ancient hoard of precious things laid up in a cave near the sea. It had been gathered by those who lived in olden times. Into the cave fled a certain slave who was fleeing from the hand of a cruel master, and he saw the hoard, and knew that the things were precious. He took a cup of gold, curiously carved, in his hand, and he said, "If I return to my master with this in my hand, surely he will be gracious unto me." And he went to his master and gave him the ancient cup, and found grace in his sight.

But there lay beside the ancient hoard a dragon fierce and terrible, and it was the guardian of the hoard. When the dragon knew that the hand of man had been in the ancient hoard which it had so long guarded, it was wroth exceedingly. It issued forth from the cave, and went through the land in the night season. From its mouth there issued streams of fire, and no man could stand before it. Even the houses and cities of men were burned and blasted by its breath.

The old King Beowulf heard what the dragon was doing to his land and his people. He said, —

"In my youth I fought many fights, and I will go and seek out this monster, and fight with him for my people's sake."

He bade farewell to his men, and went with a few attendants to the cave where he heard dwelt the dragon. He was clad in a coat of mail, and held his sword in his hand. He bore also a shield of iron, that he might withstand the fiery breath of the dragon. But he said to his men, —

"I would not bear sword and shield against this monster if it were possible. Rather would I meet him as I did Grendel of old, with the grip of my hand."

When they drew near the place where the dragon lay, Beowulf said to his followers, —

"Tarry ye here in the wood by the hillside; I will go alone and seek the dragon. I mean to gain the treasure in yonder cave for my people, or to die in the attempt."

The old king then went towards the cave beside the sea, with his shield on his arm, and in his hand the old sword with which he had fought many battles. He saw before him an ancient arch of stone, and issuing from it a stream of water, and the water was hot exceedingly, so that he could not dip his hand in it. He then knew that the dragon was near, and he shouted with a loud voice. The dragon heard his shout, and its rage awoke at the voice of man. It rushed forth from the den to destroy the bold fighter who had come to disturb it. As soon as it saw Beowulf, it vomited forth a stream of burning flame. But he sheltered himself behind his

shield, and struck hard blows with his sword. Although he struck often and strongly, he was not able to pierce the thick scales of the monster. And the edge of his sword soon grew blunt with much striking.

Beowulf's men watched the fight from afar. They were hiding in the wood. Fear filled their hearts as they looked upon the fiery monster. One of them, Wiglaf by name, grieved when he saw his master fighting alone against the serpent. He said to the others, —

"When we received many gifts from our lord in the beer hall, we promised to follow him, and to stand by him in the fight. The time is come when our lord hath need of us. Let us go to his help against the fiery dragon, that seems ready to devour him."

Having spoken these words, Wiglaf ran down the hill to the aid of his lord. He shouted to him, —

"Dear Beowulf, strike hard as in the days of thy youth. I will help thee."

But the serpent again came upon them vomiting forth fire, and the shield of Wiglaf was quickly burned up. It was but a wooden shield that the hero bore. Then was he fain to take refuge behind the shield of his lord. The serpent pressed hard upon the two warriors, but Beowulf, mindful of his old deeds, fought mightily with his sword, and kept it off. But at length Naegling, Beowulf's sword, broke in his hand, and he could not longer keep the serpent at a distance. The foul beast drew near to him and clasped him in its horrid coils, so that the blood spouted from the body of the old king. And the fiery breath of the creature burned his hand. But Beowulf yielded not his life. He bethought him

of the knife which he bore by his side, and drawing it he plunged its sharp edge into the serpent's belly. It fell dead, and the king was released from its embrace. But Beowulf was sore wounded, and sick unto death. He lay beside the dragon which he had slain, and the wounds which he had received burned as with fire; and he knew that the time had come for him to leave this world.

Wiglaf the thane went to the side of his beloved lord, and he gently bathed him with water, for he was covered with blood. Beowulf looked towards the mouth of the cave from which the dragon came forth, and behold, he saw stone arches strong and mighty, and he knew that they were the work of the giants of old.

Beowulf spake to Wiglaf, and said, "Death is coming near to me, Wiglaf, and had I a son I would now give my armor to him, but no son lives of mine. For fifty winters have I ruled over the Geatas. I have fought the battles of my people, and I have never sworn falsely, nor have I stained my hands in the blood of my kindred. Now I am sorely wounded, and sick unto death. But fain would I look upon the treasure for which I have given my life. Pray, Wiglaf, go quickly into the cave and fetch out some of the precious things, that my eyes may behold them before I die."

Wiglaf obeyed the command of the king, and fetched from the cave bright gold, and precious gems, and ancient cups made in the olden times. On his return he found his lord fainting, and at the point of death. He sprinkled him again with water, and again Beowulf opened his eyes, and he gazed on the beautiful things before him. He said, —

"I give thanks, O Lord of all, King of glory, for this treasure which I have gained for my people in the day of my death. I sorrow not that I have spent my life in the winning of it. Bid my warriors raise a lofty mound on Hrones Ness. Sailors at sea will behold it from afar, and they will call it Beowulf's Mound."

Beowulf then unclasped from his neck a collar of gold and gave it to Wiglaf. He gave to him also his coat of mail and his helmet, and bade him wear them.

"Thou art the last of my race," he said; "for fate has carried away the rest of my kindred, and I go to join them."

These were the last words of Beowulf, king of the Geatas. His spirit left his body and went forth to seek the dwelling-place of the true.

Wiglaf sat beside his lord, and he sought to revive him by sprinkling water upon his face, for he knew not that he was dead.

Then came forth from the wood, where they had been hiding, the unfaithful followers of Beowulf, who did not fight for their lord through fear of the dragon. They came as men ashamed. And Wiglaf reproached them with fierce words. He said to them, —

"The armor which you wear was the gift of the king. He gave it to you when you sat on the ale bench, that you might stand by his side in the day of battle. But he threw it away, for you came not to his help when the mighty beast assailed him. It is better for an earl to die than live the shameful life of a coward."

When it was known among the Geatas that Beowulf their king was dead, there was great sorrow and lam-

entation throughout the land. And men said one to another, —

"Now cometh a time of trouble and strife, for the king is dead, and there is no one to rule among us. Alas! the Franks and Frisians will speedily hear the tidings, and will greatly rejoice."

Many went out to see the dragon which Beowulf had slain. It was fifty feet in length, and looked so fearful that none would have approached it had it been still living. Beside it lay cups of gold, ancient and precious swords, and other precious things of ancient times. Wiglaf spake to those who came, and said to them, —

"These precious things have been won with a great price, the life of our dear prince, the shepherd of the people. He, before he died, said many things to me; and he asked me to say to his warriors to erect a lofty mound at the place where his body was burned, to keep alive his name. This he asked as a return for all the kind deeds which he had done for his people during his lifetime. Let us make ready to obey his commands."

Wiglaf asked seven thanes of the king to enter again with him into the cave. One went before him with a lighted torch. And they carried out what yet remained of the hoard within the cave.

They pushed the body of the dragon over the cliffs into the sea. In a wagon they bore away the treasure of the cave, and the body of the dead King Beowulf was borne to Hrones Ness.

A mighty funeral pile was there erected, for wood was brought from many places to build it up. It was hung round with helmets, with shields, and with coats of mail.

The warriors placed the body of Beowulf in the midst of it, and they kindled the pile with a blazing torch. Then there rose black smoke and bright flame, and the fire roared fiercely. The heavens seemed covered with darkness, and everywhere you might have heard the voice of wailing. At length all was consumed, the fire burned out.

Afterwards a mighty mound was erected on the hill beside the sea. The Geatas buried in it rings of gold and precious things, which they had brought forth from the cave.

Often in after days did the Geatas speak of their King Beowulf, and said, —

"Among the kings of the earth, Beowulf was the greatest lover of glory. He was mild and gentle too, and loved his people."

ARTHUR IS CHOSEN KING AND GETS HIS SWORD EXCALIBUR

By Thomas Malory

IT befell in the days of Uther Pendragon, when he was king of all England, and so reigned, that there was a mighty duke in Cornwall that held war against him long time. And the duke was named the Duke of Tintagil. And so by means King Uther sent for this duke, charging him to bring his wife with him, for she was called a fair lady, and a passing wise, and her name was called Igraine. And the messengers had their answers, and that was this, shortly, that neither he nor his wife would not come at him. Then was the king wonderly wroth. And then the king sent him plain word again, and bade him be ready and stuff him and garnish him, for within forty days he would fetch him out of the biggest castle that he hath. When the duke had this warning, anon he went and furnished and garnished two strong castles of his, of the which the one hight Tintagil and the other castle hight Terrabil. So his wife, Dame Igraine, he put in the castle of Tintagil, and himself he put in the castle of Terrabil, the which had many issues and posterns out. Then in all haste came Uther with a great host, and laid a siege about the castle of Terrabil. And there he

Uther and Igraine.

pight many pavilions, and there was great war made on both parties, and much people slain.

But the Duke of Tintagil espied how the king rode from the siege of Terrabil, and therefore that night he issued out of the castle at a postern, for to have distressed the king's host. And so, through his own issue, the duke himself was slain or ever the king came at the castle of Tintagil. Then all the barons by one assent prayed the king of accord between the Lady Igraine and him. The king gave them leave, for fain would he have been accorded with her. So the king put all the trust in Ulfius to entreat between them; so, by the entreat, at the last the king and she met together. Now will we do well, said Ulfius: our king is a lusty knight and wifeless, and my Lady Igraine is a passing fair lady; it were great joy unto us all and it might please the king to make her his queen. Unto that they were all well accorded, and moved it to the king: and anon, like a lusty knight, he assented thereto with good-will, and so in all haste they were married in a morning with great mirth and joy.

Then the time came that the Queen Igraine should bear a child. Then came Merlin unto the king and said, Sir, ye must purvey you for the nourishing of your child. As thou wilt, said the king, be it. Well, said Merlin, I know a lord of yours in this land, that is a passing true man and a faithful, and he shall have the nourishing of your child, and his name is Sir Ector, and he is a lord of fair livelihood in many parts in England and Wales. And this lord, Sir Ector, let him be sent for, for to come and speak with you; and desire him yourself, as he loveth you, that he will put his

Birth of Arthur.

own child to nourishing to another woman, and that his wife nourish yours. And when the child is born, let it be delivered unto me at yonder privy postern unchristened. So like as Merlin devised it was done. And when Sir Ector was come, he made affiance to the king for to nourish the child like as the king desired; and there the king granted Sir Ector great rewards. Then when the lady was delivered, the king commanded two knights and two ladies to take the child bound in a cloth of gold, and that ye deliver him to what poor man ye meet at the postern gate of the castle. So the child was delivered unto Merlin, and so he bare it forth unto Sir Ector, and made an holy man to christen him, and named him Arthur: and so Sir Ector's wife nourished him with her own breast.

Then within two years King Uther fell sick of a great malady. And in the meanwhile his enemies usurped upon him, and did a great battle upon his men, and slew many of his people. Sir, said Merlin, ye may not lie so as ye do, for ye must to the field, though ye ride on an horse-litter; for ye shall never have the better of your enemies but if your person be there, and then shall ye have the victory. So it was done as Merlin had devised, and they carried the king forth in a horse-litter with a great host towards his enemies. And at St. Albans there met with the king a great host of the North. And that day Sir Ulfius and Sir Brastias did great deeds of arms, and King Uther's men overcame the Northern battle, and slew many people, and put the remnant to flight. And then the king returned unto London, and made great joy of his victory. And

Death of Uther.

then he fell passing sore sick, so that three days and three nights he was speechless; wherefore all the barons made great sorrow, and asked Merlin what counsel were best. There is none other remedy, said Merlin, but God will have his will. But look ye all barons be before King Uther to-morn, and God and I shall make him to speak. So on the morn all the barons with Merlin came tofore the king: then Merlin said aloud unto King Uther, Sir, shall your son Arthur be king after your days, of this realm, with all the appurtenance? Then Uther Pendragon turned him and said in hearing of them all, I give him God's blessing and mine, and bid him pray for my soul, and righteously and worshipfully that he claim the crown upon forfeiture of my blessing. And therewith he yielded up the ghost. And then was he interred as longed to a king. Wherefore the queen, fair Igraine, made great sorrow, and all the barons. Then stood the realm in great jeopardy long while, for every lord that was mighty of men made him strong, and many wend to have been king.

Then Merlin went to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and counseled him for to send for all the lords of the realm, and all the gentlemen of arms, that they should to London come by Christmas upon pain of cursing: and for this cause — that Jesus, that was born on that night, that He would of his great mercy shew some miracle, as He was come to be king of mankind, for to show some miracle who should be rightwise king of this realm. So the archbishop by the advice of Merlin sent for all the lords and gentlemen of arms, that they should come by Christmas even unto

The Wonder of the Sword.

London. And many of them made them clean of their life, that their prayer might be the more acceptable unto God.

So in the greatest church of London (whether it were Paul's or not, the French book maketh no mention) all the estates were long or day in the church for to pray. And when matins and the first mass was done, there was seen in the churchyard against the high altar a great stone four square, like unto a marble stone, and in the midst thereof was like an anvil of steel a foot on high, and therein stack a fair sword naked by the point, and letters there were written in gold about the sword, that said thus: Whoso pulleth out this sword of this stone and anvil is rightwise king born of all England. Then the people marveled, and told it to the archbishop. I command, said the archbishop, that ye keep you within your church, and pray unto God still; that no man touch the sword till the high mass be all done. So when all masses were done, all the lords went to behold the stone and the sword. And when they saw the scripture, some assayed — such as would have been king. But none might stir the sword nor move it. He is not here, said the archbishop, that shall achieve the sword, but doubt not God will make him known. But this is my counsel, said the archbishop, that we let purvey ten knights, men of good fame, and they to keep this sword. So it was ordained, and then there was made a cry, that every man should assay that would, for to win the sword. And upon New Year's Day the barons let make a justs and a tournament, that all knights that would just or tourney there might play: and all this was ordained for to keep

the lords together and the commons, for the archbishop trusted that God would make him known that should win the sword.

So upon New Year's Day when the service was done the barons rode to the field, some to just, and some to tourney; and so it happened that Sir Ector, that had great livelihood about London, rode unto the justs, and with him rode Sir Kay, his son, and young Arthur that was his nourished brother, and Sir Kay was made knight at Allhallowmas afore. So as they rode to the justs-ward Sir Kay had lost his sword, for he had left it at his father's lodging, and so he prayed young Arthur to ride for his sword. I will well, said Arthur, and rode fast after the sword; and when he came home the lady and all were out to see the justing. Then was Arthur wroth, and said to himself, I will ride to the churchyard and take the sword with me that sticketh in the stone, for my brother Sir Kay shall not be without a sword this day.

Arthur pulls out the sword,

So when he came to the churchyard Sir Arthur alighted and tied his horse to the stile, and so he went to the tent, and found no knights there, for they were at the justing; and so he handled the sword by the handles, and lightly and fiercely pulled it out of the stone, and took his horse and rode his way till he came to his brother Sir Kay, and delivered him the sword. And as soon as Sir Kay saw the sword he wist well it was the sword of the stone, and so he rode to his father Sir Ector, and said: Sir, lo here is the sword of the stone; wherefore I must be king of this land. When Sir Ector beheld the sword he returned again and came to the church, and

there they alighted all three and went into the church, and anon he made Sir Kay to swear upon a book how he came to that sword. Sir, said Sir Kay, by my brother Arthur, for he brought it to me. How gat ye this sword? said Sir Ector to Arthur. Sir, I will tell you: when I came home for my brother's sword, I found nobody at home to deliver me his sword, and so I thought my brother Sir Kay should not be swordless, and so I came hither eagerly and pulled it out of the stone without any pain. Found ye any knights about this sword? said Sir Ector. Nay, said Arthur. Now, said Sir Ector to Arthur, I understand ye must be king of this land. Wherefore I, said Arthur, and for what cause? Sir, said Ector, for God will have it so: for there should never man have drawn out this sword but he that shall be rightwise king of this land. Now let me see whether ye can put the sword there as it was, and pull it out again. That is no mastery, said Arthur: and so he put it into the stone. Therewith Sir Ector assayed to pull out the sword and failed.

Now assay, said Sir Ector to Sir Kay. And anon he pulled at the sword with all his might, but it would not be. Now shall ye assay, said Sir Ector to Arthur. I will well, said Arthur, and pulled it out easily. And therewithal Sir Ector kneeled down to the earth, and Sir Kay. Alas, said Arthur, mine own dear father and brother, why kneel ye to me. Nay, nay, my Lord Arthur, it is not so: I was never your father nor of your blood, but I wote well ye are of an higher blood than I wend ye were. And then Sir Ector told him all, how he was betaken him for to nourish him, and by whose com-

mandment, and by Merlin's deliverance. Then Arthur made great dole when he understood that Sir Ector was not his father. Sir, said Ector unto Arthur, will ye be my good and gracious lord when ye are king? Else were I to blame, said Arthur, for ye are the man in the world that I am most beholding to, and my good lady and mother your wife, that as well as her own hath fostered me and kept. And if ever it be God's will that I be king, as ye say, ye shall desire of me what I may do, and I shall not fail you: God forbid I should fail you. Sir, said Sir Ector, I will ask no more of you but that you will make my son, your foster-brother Sir Kay, seneschal of all your lands. That shall be done, said Arthur, and more by the faith of my body, that never man shall have that office but he, while he and I live. Therewithal they went unto the archbishop, and told him how the sword was achieved, and by whom.

And on Twelfth Day all the barons came thither, and to assay to take the sword who that would assay. But there afore them all there might none take it out but Arthur, wherefore there were many lords wroth, and said it was great shame unto them all and the realm, to be over governed with a boy of no high blood born. And so they fell out at that time that it was put off till Candlemas, and then all the barons should meet there again. But always the ten knights were ordained to watch the sword day and night, and so they set a pavilion over the stone and the sword, and five always watched. So at Candlemas many more great lords came thither for to have won the sword, but there might none prevail. And right as Arthur did at Christmas he did at Candlemas,

and pulled out the sword easily; whereof the barons were sore aggrieved, and put it off in delay till the high feast of Easter. And as Arthur sped afore, so did he at Easter; yet there were some of the great lords had indignation that Arthur should be their king, and put it off in a delay till the feast of Pentecost. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury by Merlin's providence let purvey them of the best knights that they might get, and such knights as King Uther Pendragon loved best and most trusted in his days, and such knights were put about Arthur, as Sir Baudwin of Britain, Sir Kay, Sir Ulfius, Sir Brastias. All these, with many other, were always about Arthur, day and night, till the feast of Pentecost.

And at the feast of Pentecost all manner of men assayed to pull at the sword that would assay, but none might prevail but Arthur; and he pulled it out afore all the lords and commons that were there: wherefore all the commons cried at once, We will have Arthur unto our king; we will put him no more in delay, for we all see that it is God's will that he shall be our king, and who that holdeth against it we will slay him. And therewithal they kneeled down all at once, both rich and poor, and cried Arthur mercy, because they had delayed him so long. And Arthur forgave them, and took the sword between both his hands, and offered it upon the altar where the archbishop was, and so was he made knight of the best man that was there. And so anon was the coronation made, and there was he sworn unto his lords and the commons for to be a true king, to stand with true justice from thenceforth the days of this life. Also then he made all lords

and is chosen king.

that held of the crown to come in, and to do service as they ought to do. And many complaints were made unto Sir Arthur of great wrongs that were done since the death of King Uther, of many lands that were bereaved lords, knights, ladies, and gentlemen. Wherefore King Arthur made the lands to be given again unto them that owned them. When this was done that the king had stablished all the countries about London, then he let make Sir Kay seneschal of England; and Sir Baudwin of Britain was made constable; and Sir Ulfius was made chamberlain; and Sir Brastias was made warden to wait upon the north from Trent forwards, for it was that time, for the most part, the king's enemies'. But within few years after, Arthur won all the north, Scotland, and all that were under their obeisance. Also Wales, a part of it held against Arthur, but he overcame them all as he did the remnant through the noble prowess of himself and his knights of the Round Table.

Then the king removed into Wales, and let cry a great feast, that it should be holden at Pentecost, after the incoronation of him at the city of Carlion.

Then on a day there came into the court a squire on horseback, leading a knight before him wounded to the death, and told him how there was a knight in the forest had reared up a pavilion by a well, and hath slain my master, a good knight, his name was Miles; wherefore I beseech you that my master may be buried, and that some knight may revenge my master's death. Then the noise was great of that knight's death in the court, and every man said his advice; then came Griflet that was but a squire, and he was but young, of the age of King

Arthur; so he besought the king for all his service that he had done him to give him the order of knighthood.

Thou art full young and tender of age, said Arthur, for to take so high an order on thee. Sir, said Griflet, I beseech you make me knight. Sir, said Merlin, it were great pity to lose Griflet, for he will be a passing good man when he is of age, abiding with you the term of his life. And if he adventure his body with yonder knight at the fountain it is in great peril if ever he come again, for he is one of the best knights of the world, and the strongest man of arms. Well, said King Arthur. So at the desire of Griflet the king made him knight. Now, said Arthur unto Sir Griflet, since I have made you knight, thou must give me a gift. What ye will, said Griflet. Thou shalt promise me by the faith of thy body, when thou hast justed with the knight at the fountain, whether it fall ye be on foot or on horseback, that right so ye shall come again unto me without making any more debate. I will promise you, said Griflet, as you desire.

Then took Griflet his horse in great haste, and dressed his shield, and took a spear in his hand, and so he rode a great wallop till he came to the fountain, and thereby he saw a rich pavilion, and thereby under a cloth stood a fair horse well saddled and bridled, and on a tree a shield of divers colors, and a great spear. Then Griflet smote on the shield with the butt of his spear that the shield fell down to the ground. With that the knight came out of the pavilion and said, Fair knight, why smote ye down my shield? For I will just with you, said Griflet. It is better ye do not, said the knight, for ye are but young, and late made knight, and your might is nothing to mine.

As for that, said Griflet, I will just with you. That is me loath, said the knight, but since I must needs I will dress me thereto: of whence be ye? said the knight. Sir, I am of Arthur's court. So the two knights ran together, that Griflet's spear all to-shivered, and therewithal he smote Griflet through the shield and the left side, and brake the spear, that the truncheon stack in his body, that horse and knight fell down.

When the knight saw him lie so on the ground he alighted, and was passing heavy, for he wend he had slain him, and then he unlaced his helm and gat him wind, and so with the truncheon he set him on his horse and gat him wind, and so betook him to God, and said he had a mighty heart, and if he might live he would prove a passing good knight. And so Sir Griflet rode to the court, where great dole was made for him. But through good leeches he was healed and saved. And the king was passingly wroth for the hurt of Sir Griflet. And so he commanded a privyman of his chamber, that or it be day his best horse and armor, with all that belongeth unto his person, be without the city or to-morrow day. Right so, or to-morrow day, he met with his man and his horse, and so mounted up, and dressed his shield, and took his spear, and bade his chamberlain tarry there till he came again.

Arthur is overcome by the knight at the fountain.

And so Arthur rode a soft pace till it was day, and then was he aware of three churls chasing Merlin, and would have slain him. Then the king rode unto them and bade them, Flee churls! Then were they afeard when they saw a knight, and fled. O Merlin, said Arthur, here

haddest thou been slain, for all thy crafts, had I not been. Nay, said Merlin, not so, for I could save myself and I would, and thou art more near thy death than I am, for thou goest to the deathward, and God be not thy friend. So as they went thus talking they came to the fountain, and the rich pavilion there by it. Then King Arthur was ware where sat a knight armed in a chair. Sir knight, said Arthur, for what cause abidest thou here, that there may no knight ride this way but if he just with thee, said the king: I rede thee leave that custom, said Arthur. This custom, said the knight, have I used and will use maugre who saith nay; and who is grieved with my custom let him amend it that will. I will amend it, said Arthur. I shall defend thee, said the knight.

Anon he took his horse, and dressed his shield, and took a spear, and they met so hard either in other's shields that they all to-shivered their spears. Therewith Arthur anon pulled out his sword. Nay, not so, said the knight, it is fairer that we twain run more together with sharp spears. I will well, said Arthur, and I had any more spears. I have enow, said the knight. So there came a squire, and brought two good spears, and Arthur chose one and he another: so they spurred their horses, and came together with all their mights, that either brake their spears to their hands. Then Arthur set hand on his sword. Nay, said the knight, ye shall do better; ye are a passing good juster as ever I met withal, and once for the love of the high order of knighthood let us just once again. I assent you, said Arthur.

Anon there were brought two great spears, and every

knight gat a spear, and therewith they ran together that Arthur's spear all to-shivered. But the other knight hit him so hard in midst of the shield that horse and man fell to the earth, and therewith Arthur was eager, and pulled out his sword, and said, I will assay thee, Sir knight, on foot, for I have lost the honor on horseback. I will be on horseback, said the knight. Then was Arthur wroth, and dressed his shield towards him with his sword drawn. When the knight saw that, he alight, for him thought no worship to have a knight at such avail, he to be on horseback, and he on foot, and so he alight and dressed his shield unto Arthur. And there began a strong battle with many great strokes, and so hewed with their swords that the cantles flew in the fields, and much blood they bled both, that all the place there as they fought was overbled with blood, and thus they fought long, and rested them; and then they went to the battle again, and so hurtled together like two rams that either fell to the earth. So at the last they smote together, that both their swords met even together. But the sword of the knight smote King Arthur's sword in two pieces, wherefore he was heavy.

Then said the knight unto Arthur, Thou art in my danger whether me list to save thee or slay thee, and but thou yield thee as overcome and recreant thou shalt die. As for death, said King Arthur, welcome be it when it cometh; but to yield me unto thee as recreant I had lever die than to be so shamed. And therewithal the king leapt unto Pellinore, and took him by the middle, and threw him down, and rased off his helmet. When the knight felt that he was adread, for he was a passing

big man of might, and anon he brought Arthur under him, and rased off his helm, and would have smitten off his head.

Therewithal came Merlin, and said, Knight, hold thy hand, for and thou slay that knight thou puttest this realm in the greatest damage that ever was realm; for this knight is a man of more worship than thou wotest of. Why, who is he? said the knight. It is King Arthur. Then would he have slain him for dread of his wrath, and heaved up his sword, and therewith Merlin cast an enchantment to the knight, that he fell to the earth in a great sleep. Then Merlin took up King Arthur, and rode forth on the knight's horse. Alas, said Arthur, what hast thou done, Merlin? hast thou slain this good knight by thy crafts? There lived not so worshipful a knight as he was; I had lever than the stint of my land a year that he were on live. Care ye not, said Merlin, for he is wholer than ye, for he is but on sleep, and will awake within three hours. I told you, said Merlin, what a knight he was; here had ye be slain had I not been. Also there liveth not a bigger knight than he is one, and he shall hereafter do you right good service, and his name is Pellinore, and he shall have two sons that shall be passing good men; save one, they shall have no fellow of prowess and of good living; and their names shall be Percivale of Wales and Lamerake of Wales: and he shall tell you the name of your sister's son that shall be the destruction of all this realm.

but is saved by Merlin.

Right so the king and he departed, and went until an hermit that was a good man and a great leach. So the hermit searched all his wounds and gave him good salves;

so the king was there three days, and then were his wounds well amended that he might ride and go, and so departed. And as they rode, Arthur said, I have no sword. No force, said Merlin, hereby is a sword that shall be yours and I may. So they rode till they came to a lake, the which was a fair water and broad, and in the midst of the lake Arthur was ware of an arm clothed in white samite, that held a fair sword in that hand. Lo, said Merlin, yonder is that sword that I spake of. With that they saw a damsel going upon the lake: What damsel is that? said Arthur. That is the Lady of the Lake, said Merlin, and within that lake is a rock, and therein is as fair a place as any on earth, and richly beseen, and this damsel will come to you anon, and then speak ye fair to her that she will give you that sword. Anon withal came the damsel unto Arthur and saluted him, and he her again. Damsel, said Arthur, what sword is that, that yonder the arm holdeth above the water? I would it were mine, for I have no sword. Sir Arthur, king, said the damsel, that sword is mine, and if ye will give me a gift when I ask it you, ye shall have it. By my faith, said Arthur, I will give you what gift ye will ask. Well, said the damsel, go ye into yonder barge and row yourself to the sword, and take it and the scabbard with you, and I will ask my gift when I see my time. So Sir Arthur and Merlin alight, and tied their horses to two trees, and so they went into the ship; and when they came to the sword that the hand held, Sir Arthur took it up by the handles, and took it with him. And the arm and the hand went under the water; and so they came unto the land and rode forth.

Arthur gets Excalibur.

CAME TO A LAKE THE WHICH WAS FAIR WATER AND BROAD, AND IN THE MIDST OF THE LAKE ARTHUR WAS AWARE OF AN ARM CLOTHED IN WHITE SAMITE, THAT HELD A FAIR SWORD IN THAT HAND. . . . WELL, SAID THE DAMSEL, GO YOU INTO YONDER BARGE AND ROW YOURSELF TO THE SWORD, AND TAKE IT AND THE SCABBARD WITH YOU, AND I WILL ASK MY GIFT WHEN I SEE MY TIME. . . . SIR ARTHUR TOOK IT UP BY THE HANDLES, AND TOOK IT WITH HIM. AND THE ARM AND THE HAND WENT UNDER THE WATER

THE INSTITUTION OF THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL

By Thomas Malory

AT the vigil of Pentecost, when all the fellowship of the Round Table were comen unto Camelot, and there heard their service, and the tables were set ready to the meat, right so entered into the hall a full fair gentlewoman on horseback, that had ridden full fast, for her horse was all besweat. Then she there alight, and came before the king, and saluted him; and then he said, Damsel, God thee bless! Sir, said she, I pray you say me where Sir Launcelot is? Yonder ye may see him, said the king. Then she went unto Launcelot and said, Sir Launcelot, I salute you on King Pelles' behalf, and I require you come on with me hereby into a forest. Then Sir Launcelot asked her with whom she dwelled? I dwell, said she, with King Pelles. What will ye with me? said Sir Launcelot. Ye shall know, said she, when ye come thither. Well, said he, I will gladly go with you. So Sir Launcelot bade his squire saddle his horse and bring his arms; and in all haste he did his commandment. Then came the queen unto Launcelot and said, Will ye leave us at this high feast? Madam, said the gentlewoman, wit ye well he shall be with you to-morrow by dinner-time. If I wist, said the queen, that he should not be with us here to-morn, he should not go with you by my good-will.

Right so departed Sir Launcelot with the gentlewoman, and rode until that he came into a forest, and into a great valley, where they saw an abbey of nuns; and there was a squire ready, and opened the gates; and so they entered, and descended off their horses, and there came a fair fellowship about Sir Launcelot and welcomed him, and were passing glad of his coming. And then they led him into the abbess's chamber, and unarmed him, and right so he was ware upon a bed lying two of his cousins, Sir Bors and Sir Lionel, and then he waked them, and when they saw him they made great joy. Sir, said Sir Bors unto Sir Launcelot, what adventure hath brought thee hither, for we wend to-morrow to have found you at Camelot? Truly, said Sir Launcelot, a gentlewoman brought me hither, but I know not the cause. In the meanwhile, as they thus stood talking together, there came twelve nuns which brought with them Galahad, the which was passing fair and well made, that unnethe in the world men might not find his match; and all those ladies wept. Sir, said the ladies, we bring you here this child, the which we have nourished, and we pray you to make him a knight; for of a more worthier man's hand may he not receive the order of knighthood. Sir Launcelot beheld that young squire, and saw him seemly and demure as a dove, with all manner of good features, that he wend of his age never to have seen so fair a man of form. Then said Sir Launcelot, Cometh this desire of himself? He and all they said, Yea. Then shall he, said Sir Launcelot, receive the high order of knighthood as to-morrow at the rever-

Galahad is knighted by Sir Launcelot.

ence of the high feast. That night Sir Launcelot had passing good cheer, and on the morn at the hour of prime, at Galahad's desire, he made him knight, and said, God make him a good man, for beauty faileth you not as any that liveth.

The siege perilous and the adventure of the sword.

Now, fair sir, said Sir Launcelot, will ye come with me unto the court of King Arthur? Nay, said he, I will not go with you as at this time. Then he departed from them and took his two cousins with him, and so they came unto Camelot by the hour of undern on Whitsunday. By that time the king and the queen were gone to the minster to hear their service: then the king and the queen were passing glad of Sir Bors and Sir Lionel, and so was all the fellowship. So when the king and all the knights were come from service, the barons espied in the sieges of the Round Table, all about written with gold letters, — Here ought to sit he, and he ought to sit here. And thus they went so long until that they came to the siege perilous, where they found letters newly written of gold, that said: Four hundred winters and fifty-four accomplished after the passion of our Lord Jesu Christ ought this siege to be fulfilled. Then all they said, This is a marvelous thing, and an adventurous. In the name of God, said Sir Launcelot; and then he accounted the term of the writing, from the birth of our Lord unto that day. It seemeth me, said Sir Launcelot, this siege ought to be fulfilled this same day, for this is the feast of Pentecost after the four hundred and four and fifty year; and if it would please all parties, I would none of these letters were seen this day,

till he be come that ought to achieve this adventure. Then made they to ordain a cloth of silk for to cover these letters in the siege perilous. Then the king bade haste unto dinner. Sir, said Sir Kay the steward, if ye go now unto your meat, ye shall break your old custom of your court. For ye have not used on this day to sit at your meat or that ye have seen some adventure. Ye say sooth, said the king, but I had so great joy of Sir Launcelot and of his cousins, which be come to the court whole and sound, that I bethought me not of my old custom. So as they stood speaking, in came a squire, and said unto the king, Sir, I bring unto you marvelous tidings. What be they? said the king. Sir, there is here beneath at the river a great stone, which I saw fleet above the water, and therein saw I sticking a sword. The king said, I will see that marvel. So all the knights went with him, and when they came unto the river, they found there a stone fleeting, as it were of red marble, and therein stack a fair and a rich sword, and in the pommel thereof were precious stones, wrought with subtile letters of gold. Then the barons read the letters, which said in this wise: Never shall man take me hence but only he by whose side I ought to hang, and he shall be the best knight of the world. When the king had seen these letters, he said unto Sir Launcelot, Fair sir, this sword ought to be yours, for I am sure ye be the best knight of the world. Then Sir Launcelot answered full soberly: Certes, sir, it is not my sword: also, sir, wit ye well I have no hardiness to set my hand to, for it longed not to hang by my side. Also who that assayeth to take that sword, and faileth of it, he shall receive

a wound by that sword, that he shall not be whole long after. And I will that ye wit that this same day will the adventures of the Sancgreal, that is called the holy vessel, begin.

Now, fair nephew, said the king unto Sir Gawaine, assay ye for my love. Sir, he said, save your good grace, I shall not do that. Sir, said the king, assay to take the sword, and at my commandment. Sir, said Gawaine, your commandment I will obey. And therewith he took up the sword by the handles, but he might not stir it. I thank you, said the king to Sir Gawaine. My lord Sir Gawaine, said Sir Launcelot, now wit ye well, this sword shall touch you so sore that ye shall will ye had never set your hand thereto, for the best castle of this realm. Sir, he said, I might not withsay mine uncle's will and commandment. But when the king heard this, he repented it much, and said unto Sir Percivale that he should assay for his love. And he said, Gladly, for to bear Sir Gawaine fellowship. And therewith he set his hand on the sword, and drew it strongly, but he might not move it. Then were there more that durst be so hardy to set their hands thereto. Now may ye go to your dinner, said Sir Kay unto the king, for a marvelous adventure have ye seen.

So the king and all went unto the court, and every knight knew his own place, and set him therein, and young men that were knights served them. So when they were served, and all sieges fulfilled, save only the siege perilous, anon there befell a marvelous adventure, that all the doors and the windows of the place shut by themself. Not for then the hall was not greatly darkened,

and therewith they abashed both one and other. Then King Arthur spake first, and said, Fair fellows and lords, we have seen this day marvels, but or night I suppose we shall see greater marvels. In the meanwhile came in a good old man, and an ancient, clothed all in white, and there was no knight knew from whence he came. And with him he brought a young knight, both on foot, in red arms, without sword or shield, save a scabbard hanging by his side. And these words he said, Peace be with you, fair lords. Then the old man said unto Arthur, Sir, I bring here a young knight the which is of king's lineage, and of the kindred of Joseph of Arimathie, whereby the marvels of this court and of strange realms shall be fully accomplished.

The king was right glad of his words, and said unto the good man, Sir, ye be right welcome, and the young knight with you. Then the old man made the young man to unarm him; and he was in a coat of red sendal, and bare a mantle upon his shoulder that was furred with ermine, and put that upon him. And the old knight said unto the young knight, Sir, follow me. And anon he led him unto the siege perilous, where beside sat Sir Launcelot; and the good man lift up the cloth, and found there letters that said thus: This is the siege of Galahad the haut prince. Sir, said the old knight, wit ye well that place is yours. And then he set him down surely in that siege. And then he said to the old man, Sir, ye may now go your way, for well have ye done that ye were commanded to do. And recommend me unto my grandsire King Pelles, and say to him on my behalf, I shall come

Galahad achieves the adventure.

and see him as soon as ever I may. So the good man departed, and there met him twenty noble squires, and so took their horses and went their way. Then all the knights of the Round Table marveled them greatly of Sir Galahad, that he durst sit there in that siege perilous, and was so tender of age, and wist not from whence he came, but all only by God, and said, This is he by whom the Sancgreal shall be achieved, for there sat never none but he, but he were mischieved. Then Sir Launcelot beheld his son, and had great joy of him. Then Sir Bors told his fellows, Upon pain of my life this young knight shall come unto great worship.

This noise was great in all the court, so that it came to the queen. Then she had marvel what knight it might be that durst adventure him to sit in the siege perilous. Many said unto the queen, he resembled much unto Sir Launcelot. I may well suppose, said the queen, that he is son of Sir Launcelot and King Pelles' daughter, and his name is Galahad. I would fain see him, said the queen, for he must needs be a noble man, for so is his father; I report me unto all the Round Table. So when the meat was done, that the king and all were risen, the king went unto the siege perilous, and lift up the cloth, and found there the name of Galahad; and then he shewed it unto Sir Gawaine, and said, Fair nephew, now have we among us Sir Galahad the good knight, that shall worship us all, and upon pain of my life he shall achieve the Sancgreal, right so as Sir Launcelot hath done us to understand. Then came King Arthur unto Galahad, and said, Sir, ye be welcome, for ye shall move many good knights to the quest of the Sancgreal, and ye

shall achieve that never knights might bring to an end. Then the king took him by the hand, and went down from the palace to shew Galahad the adventures of the stone.

The queen heard thereof, and came after with many ladies, and shewed them the stone where it hoved on the water. Sir, said the king unto Sir Galahad, here is a great marvel as ever I saw, and right good knights have assayed and failed. Sir, said Galahad, that is no marvel, for this adventure is not theirs, but mine, and for the surety of this sword I brought none with me; for here by my side hangeth the scabbard. And anon he laid his hand on the sword, and lightly drew it out of the stone, and put it in the sheath and said unto the king, Now it goeth better than it did aforehand. Sir, said the king, a shield God shall send you.

Now, said the king, I am sure at this quest of the Sancgreal shall all ye of the Round Table depart, and never shall I see you again whole together; therefore I will see you all whole together in the meadow of Camelot, to just and to tourney, that after your death men may speak of it, that such good knights were wholly together such a day. As unto that counsel, and at the king's request, they accorded all, and took on their harness that longed unto justing. But all this moving of the king was for this intent, for to see Galahad proved, for the king deemed he should not lightly come again unto the court after his departing. So were they assembled in the meadow, both more and less. Then Sir Galahad, by the prayer of the king and the queen, did upon him a noble jesserance, and also he did on his

The tournament.

helm, but shield would he take none for no prayer of the king. And then Sir Gawaine and other knights prayed him to take a spear. Right so he did; and the queen was in a tower with all her ladies for to behold that tournament. Then Sir Galahad dressed him in the midst of the meadow, and began to break spears marvelously, that all men had wonder of him, for he there surmounted all other knights, for within a while he had thrown down many good knights of the Round Table save twain, that was Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale.

And then the king and all estates went home unto Camelot, and so went to evensong to the great minster. And so after upon that to supper, and every knight sat in his own place as they were to-forehand. Then anon they heard cracking and crying of thunder, that them thought the place should all to-drive. In the midst of this blast entered a sunbeam more clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, and all they were alighted of the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other by their seeming fairer than ever they saw afore. Not for then there was no knight might speak one word a great while, and so they looked every man on other, as they had been dumb. Then there entered into the hall the holy Grail covered with white samite, but there was none might see it, nor who bare it. And there was all the hall fulfilled with good odors, and every knight had such meats and drinks as he best loved in this world; and when the holy Grail had been borne through the hall, then the holy vessel departed suddenly, that they wist not where it became. Then had

The vision of the Grail.

they all breath to speak. And then the king yielded thankings unto God of his good grace that he had sent them. Certes, said the king, we ought to thank our Lord Jesu greatly, for that he hath shewed us this day at the reverence of this high feast of Pentecost. Now, said Sir Gawaine, we have been served this day of what meats and drinks we thought on, but one thing beguiled us, we might not see the holy Grail, it was so preciously covered: wherefore I will make here a vow, that to-morn, without longer abiding, I shall labor in the quest of the Sancgreal, that I shall hold me out a twelvemonth and a day, or more if need be, and never shall I return again unto the court till I have seen it more openly than it hath been seen here; and if I may not speed, I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of our Lord Jesu Christ. When they of the Round Table heard Sir Gawaine say so, they rose up the most party, and made such avows as Sir Gawaine had made.

Anon as King Arthur heard this he was greatly displeased, for he wist well that they might not againsay their avows. Alas! said King Arthur unto Sir Gawaine, ye have nigh slain me with the avow and promise that ye have made. For through you ye have bereft me of the fairest fellowship and the truest of knighthood that ever were seen together in any realm of the world. For when they depart from hence, I am sure they all shall never meet more in this world, for they shall die many in the quest. And so it forethinketh me a little, for I have loved them as well as my life, wherefore it shall grieve me right sore the departition of this fellowship. For I have had an old custom to have them in my fellowship.

And therewith the tears filled in his eyes. And then he said, Gawaine, Gawaine, ye have set me in great sorrow. For I have great doubt that my true fellowship shall never meet here more again. Ah, said Sir Launcelot, comfort yourself, for it shall be unto us as a great honor, and much more than if we died in any other places, for of death we be sure. Ah Launcelot, said the king, the great love that I have had unto you all the days of my life maketh me to say such doleful words; for never Christian king had never so many worthy men at this table as I have had this day at the Round Table, and that is my great sorrow. When the queen, ladies, and gentlewomen wist these tidings, they had such sorrow and heaviness that there might no tongue tell it, for those knights had holden them in honor and charity. But among all other Queen Guenever made great sorrow. I marvel, said she, my lord would suffer them to depart from him. Thus was all the court troubled, for the love of the departition of those knights. And many of those ladies that loved knights would have gone with their lovers; and so had they done, had not an old knight come among them in religious clothing, and then he spake all on high and said, Fair lords which have sworn in the quest of the Sancgreal, thus sendeth you Nacien the hermit word, that none in this quest lead lady nor gentlewoman with him, for it is not to do in so high a service as they labor in, for I warn you plain, he that is not clean of his sins he shall not see the mysteries of our Lord Jesu Christ; and for this cause they left these ladies and gentlewomen. And then they went to rest them. And in the honor of the highness of Galahad he

was led into King Arthur's chamber, and there rested in his own bed.

And as soon as it was day the king arose, for he had no rest of all that night for sorrow. Then he went unto Gawaine and to Sir Launcelot, that were arisen for to hear mass. And then the king again said, Ah Gawaine, Gawaine, ye have betrayed me. For never shall my court be amended by you, but ye will never be sorry for me, as I am for you. And therewith the tears began to run down by his visage. And therewith the king said, Ah knight, Sir Launcelot, I require thee thou counsel me, for I would that this quest were undone, and it might be. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, ye saw yesterday so many worthy knights that then were sworn, that they may not leave it in no manner of wise. That wot I well, said the king; but it shall so heavy me at their departing, that I wot well there shall no manner of joy remedy me. And then the king and the queen went unto the minster. So anon Launcelot and Gawaine commanded their men to bring their arms. And when they all were armed, save their shields and their helms, then they came to their fellowship, which all were ready in the same wise for to go to the minster to hear their service.

Then after the service was done, the king would wit how many had taken the quest of the holy Grail, and to account them he prayed them all. Then found they by tale an hundred and fifty, and all were knights of the Round Table. And then they put on their helms and departed, and recommended them all wholly unto the queen, and there was weeping and great sorrow. Then the queen departed

The departure of the knights.

into her chamber, so that no man should perceive her great sorrows. When Sir Launcelot missed the queen he went into her chamber, and when she saw him she cried aloud, Oh, Sir Launcelot, ye have betrayed me and put me to death, for to leave thus my lord. Ah, madam, said Sir Launcelot, I pray you be not displeased, for I shall come again as soon as I may with my worship. Alas, said she, that ever I saw you! but He that suffered death upon the cross for all mankind, be to your good conduct and safety, and all the whole fellowship. Right so departed Sir Launcelot, and found his fellowship that abode his coming. And so they mounted upon their horses, and rode through the streets of Camelot, and there was weeping of the rich and poor, and the king turned away, and might not speak for weeping. So within a while they came to a city and a castle that hight Vagon: there they entered into the castle, and the lord of that castle was an old man that hight Vagon, and he was a good man of his living, and set open the gates, and made them all the good cheer that he might. And so on the morrow they were all accorded that they should depart every each from other. And then they departed on the morrow with weeping and mourning cheer, and every knight took the way that him best liked.

SIR BORS AND SIR LIONEL

By Thomas Malory

WHEN Bors was departed from Camelot, he met with a religious man riding on an ass, and Sir Bors saluted him. Anon the good man knew him, that he was one of the knights errant that was in the quest of the Sancgreal. What are ye? said the good man. Sir, said he, I am a knight that fain would be counseled in the quest of the Sancgreal: for he shall have much earthly worship that may bring it to an end. Certes, said the good man, that is sooth, for he shall be the best knight of the world, and the fairest of all the fellowship. But wit you well, there shall none attain it but by cleanness, that is, pure confession. So rode they together till that they came to an hermitage. And there he prayed Bors to dwell all that night with him: and so he alight, and put away his armor, and prayed him that he might be confessed; and so they went into the chapel, and there he was clean confessed: and they eat bread, and drank water, together. Now, said the good man, I pray thee that thou eat none other, till that thou sit at the table where the Sancgreal shall be. Sir, said he, I agree me thereto; but how wit ye that I shall sit there? Yes, said the good man, that know I, but there shall be but few of your fellows with you. All is welcome, said Sir Bors, that God sendeth me. Also, said the good man, instead of a shirt, and in sign of

The religious man and the scarlet coat.

chastisement, ye shall wear a garment; thereof I pray you do off all your clothes and your shirt, and so he did. And then he took him a scarlet coat, so that should be instead of his shirt, till he had fulfilled the quest of the Sancgreal. Then he armed him, and took his leave, and so departed. So by evensong, by adventure he came to a strong tower, and an high, and there was he lodged gladly.

Upon the morn, as soon as the day appeared, Bors departed from thence, and so rode into a forest unto the hour of midday, and there befell him a marvelous adventure. So he met at the departing of the two ways two knights, that led Lionel his brother all naked, bounden upon a strong hackney, and his hands bounden tofore his breast: and every each of them held in his hand thorns, wherewith they went beating him so sore that the blood trailed down more than in an hundred places of his body, so that he was all blood tofore and behind, but he said never a word, as he which was great of heart; he suffered all that ever they did to him as though he had felt none anguish. Anon Sir Bors dressed him to rescue him that was his brother: and so he looked upon the other side of him, and saw a knight which brought a fair gentlewoman, and would have set her in the thickest place of the forest, for to have been the more surer out of the way from them that sought him. And she, which was nothing assured, cried with an high voice, Saint Mary, succor your maid!

Bors meets with his brother Lionel bound on a horse, and with a gentlewoman in distress.

And anon she espied where Sir Bors came riding. And when she came nigh him, she deemed him a knight

of the Round Table, whereof she hoped to have some comfort; and then she conjured him, by the faith that he owed unto Him in whose service thou art entered in, and for the faith ye owe unto the high order of knighthood, and for the noble King Arthur's sake, that I suppose that made thee knight, that thou help me, and suffer me not to be shamed of this knight!

When Bors heard her say thus, he had so much sorrow there he nist not what to do. For if I let my brother be in adventure he must be slain, and that would I not for all the earth. And if I help not the maid, she is shamed forever, and also she shall lose her honor, the which she shall never get again. Then lift he up his eyes, and said weeping, Fair sweet Lord Jesu Christ, whose liege man I am, keep Lionel my brother, that these knights slay him not; and for pity of you, and for Mary's sake, I shall succor this maid.

Then dressed he him unto the knight the which had the gentlewoman, and then he cried, Sir knight, let your hand off that maiden, or ye be but dead. And then he set down the maiden and was armed at all pieces, save he lacked his spear. Then he dressed his shield, and drew out his sword, and Bors smote him so hard that it went through his shield and haberjon on the left shoulder; and through great strength he beat him down to the earth; and at the pulling out of Bors' spear there he swooned.

He rescues the gentlewoman.

Then came Bors to the maid, and said, How seemeth it you? Of this knight ye be delivered at this time. Now Sir, said she, I pray you lead me there as this knight had me. — So shall I do gladly: and took the horse of the

wounded knight, and set the gentlewoman upon him, and so brought her as she desired. Sir knight, said she, ye have better sped than ye weened, for if ye had not saved me, five hundred men should have died for it. — What knight was he that had you in the forest? — By my faith, said she, he is my cousin. So wot I never with what craft the fiend enchafed him, for yesterday he took me from my father privily; for I nor none of my father's men mistrusted him not. And if he had shamed me, he should have died for the sin, and his body shamed and dishonored forever. Thus as she stood talking with him, there came twelve knights seeking after her, and anon she told them all how Bors had delivered her; then they made great joy, and besought him to come to her father, a great lord, and he should be right welcome. Truly, said Bors, that may not be at this time, for I have a great adventure to do in this country. So he commended them unto God, and departed. Then Sir Bors rode after Lionel his brother by the trace of their horses. Thus he rode seeking a great while.

And then he rode all that day, and harbored with an old lady. And on the morn he rode to a castle in a valley, and there he met with a yeoman going a great pace toward a forest. Say me, said Sir Bors, canst thou tell me of any adventure? Sir, said he, here shall be under this castle a great and a marvelous tournament. Of what folks shall it be? said Sir Bors. The Earl of Plains (said he) shall be on the one party, and the lady's nephew of Hervin on the other party. Then Bors thought to be there, if he might meet with his brother Sir Lionel, or

Sir Lionel is wroth with Sir Bors,

any other of his fellowship which were in the quest of the Sangreal. And then he turned to an hermitage that was in the entry of the forest. And when he was come thither, he found there Sir Lionel his brother, which sat all armed at the entry of the chapel door, for to abide there harbor till on the morn that the tournament shall be. And when Sir Bors saw him he had great joy of him, that was it marvel to tell of his joy. And then he alight off his horse and said, Fair sweet brother, when came ye hither? Anon as Sir Lionel saw him he said, Ah Bors, ye may not make none avaunt, but, as for you, I might have been slain; when ye saw two knights leading me away, beating me, ye left me to succor a gentlewoman, and suffered me in peril of death: for never erst ne did no brother to another so great an untruth. And for that misdeed now I ensure you but death, for well have ye deserved it; therefore keep thee from henceforward, and that shall ye find as soon as I am armed. When Sir Bors understood his brother's wrath, he kneeled down to the earth, and cried him mercy, holding up both his hands, and prayed him to forgive him his evil will. Nay, said Lionel, that shall never be, and I may have the higher hand, that I make mine avow to God: thou shalt have death for it, for it were pity ye lived any longer.

Right so he went in, and took his harness, and mounted upon his horse, and came tofore him and said,

and tries to slay him.

Bors, keep thee from me, for I shall do to thee as I would to a felon or a traitor, for ye be the untruest knight that ever came out of so worthy an house as was King Bors de Ganis, which was our

father; therefore start upon thy horse, and so shall ye be most at your advantage. And but if ye will, I will run upon thee there as ye stand upon foot, and so the shame shall be mine and the harm yours; but of that shame reck I nought. When Sir Bors saw that he must fight with his brother or else to die, he nist not what to do. Then his heart counseled him not thereto, inasmuch as Lionel was born or he, wherefore he ought to bear him reverence; yet kneeled he down afore Lionel's horse feet, and said, Fair sweet brother, have mercy upon me and slay me not, and have in remembrance the great love which ought to be between us twain. What Sir Bors said to Lionel he recked not, for the fiend had brought him in such a will that he should slay him. Then when Lionel saw he would none other, and that he would not have risen to give him battle, he rushed over him, so that he smote Bors with his horse feet upward to the earth, and hurt him so sore that he swooned of distress, the which he felt in himself to have died without confession. So when Lionel saw this, he alight off his horse, to have smitten off his head. And so he took him by the helm, and would have rent it from his head.

Then came the hermit running unto him, which was a good man and of great age, and well had he heard all the words that were between them, and so fell down upon Sir Bors. Then he said to Lionel, Ah, gentle knight, have mercy upon me and on thy brother, for if thou slay him thou shalt be dead of sin, and that were sorrowful; for he is one of the worthiest knights of the world, and of the best condi-

The hermit interfering is slain.

tions. So God me help, said Lionel, Sir priest, but if ye flee from him I shall slay you, and he shall never the sooner be quit. Certes, said the good man, I had lever ye slay me than him, for my death shall not be great harm, not half so much as of his. Well, said Lionel, I am agreed; and set his hand to his sword, and smote him so hard that his head went backward. Not for that he restrained him of his evil will, but took his brother by the helm, and unlaced it to have stricken off his head, and had slain him without fail, but so it happed, Colgrevance, a fellow of the Round Table, came at that time thither, as our Lord's will was. And when he saw the good man slain, he marveled much what it might be. And then he beheld Lionel would have slain his brother, and knew Sir Bors which he loved right well. Then start he down and took Lionel by the shoulders, and drew him strongly aback from Bors, and said, Lionel, will ye slay your brother, the worthiest knight of the world one? and that should no good man suffer. Why, said Sir Lionel, will ye let me? therefore if ye intermit you in this, I shall slay you, and him after. Why, said Colgrevance, is this sooth, that ye will slay him? Slay him will I, said he, who so say the contrary; for he hath done so much against me that he hath well deserved it; and so ran upon him, and would have smitten him through the head; and Sir Colgrevance ran betwixt them and said, And ye be so hardy to do so more, we two shall meddle together. When Lionel understood his words, he took his shield afore him, and asked him what he was; and he told him, Colgrevance, one of his fellows.

Sir Colgrevance comes to the rescue,

Then Lionel defied him, and gave him a great stroke through the helm. Then he drew his sword, for he was a passing good knight, and defended him right manfully. So long endured the battle that Sir Bors rose up all anguishly, and beheld Sir Colgrevance, the good knight, fight with his brother for his quarrel. Then was he full sorry and heavy, and thought, if Colgrevance slew him that was his brother, he should never have joy, and if his brother slew Colgrevance the shame should ever be his. Then would he have risen to have departed them, but he had not so much might to stand on foot: so he abode him so long till Colgrevance had the worse, for Sir Lionel was of great chivalry and right hardy, for he had pierced the hauberk and the helm, that he abode but death. For he had lost much of his blood, that it was marvel that he might stand upright. Then beheld he Sir Bors, which sat dressing him upward, and said, Ah Bors, why come ye not to cast me out of peril of death, wherein I have put me to succor you, which were right now nigh the death? Certes, said Lionel, that shall not avail you, for none of you shall bear other's warrant, but that ye shall die both of my hand. When Bors heard that, he did so much he rose and put on his helm. Then perceived he first the hermit priest which was slain, then made he a marvelous sorrow upon him.

Then oft Colgrevance cried upon Sir Bors, Why will ye let me die here for your sake? if it please you that I die for you the death, it will please me the better for to save a worthy man. With that word Sir Lionel smote off the helm from his head. Then

but is slain also.

Colgrevance saw that he might not escape; then he said, Fair sweet Jesu, that I have misdone have mercy upon my soul; for such sorrow that my heart suffereth for goodness, and for alms-deed that I would have done here, be to me aligement of penance unto my soul's health. At these words Lionel smote him so sore that he bare him to the earth. So when he had slain Colgrevance, he ran upon his brother as a fiendly man, and gave him such a stroke that he made him stoop; and he, that was full of humility, prayed him, for God's love to leave this battle: For and it befell, fair brother, that I slew you, or ye me, we should be dead of that sin. Never God me help but if I have on you mercy, and I may have the better hand. Then drew Bors his sword, all weeping, and said, Fair brother, God knoweth mine intent. Ah, fair brother, ye have done full evil this day to slay such an holy priest, the which never trespassed. Also ye have slain a gentle knight, and one of our fellows. And well wot ye that I am not afeard of you greatly, but I dread the wrath of God; and this is an unkindly war, therefore God shew miracle upon us both. Now God have mercy upon me, though I defend my life against my brother. With that Bors lift up his hand, and would have smitten his brother.

Sir Bors is miraculously saved.

And then he heard a voice that said, Flee, Bors, and touch him not, or else thou shalt slay him. Right so alight a cloud betwixt them in likeness of a fire, and a marvelous flame, that both their two shields burnt. Then were they sore afraid, that they fell both to the earth, and lay there a great while in a swoon. And when they came to them-

selves, Bors saw that his brother had no harm; then he held up both his hands, for he dread God had taken vengeance upon him. With that he heard a voice say, Bors, go hence and bear thy brother no longer fellowship, but take thy way anon right to the sea, for Sir Percivale abideth thee there. Then he said to his brother, Fair sweet brother, forgive me, for God's love, all that I have trespassed unto you. Then he answered, God forgive it thee, and I do gladly.

So Sir Bors departed from him, and rode the next way to the sea.

LAUNCELOT AND ELAINE

By Thomas Malory

I

HOW SIR LAUNCELOT CAME TO ASTOLAT

SO after the quest of the Sancgreal was fulfilled, and all knights that were left on live were come again unto the Round Table, as the book of the Sancgreal maketh mention, then was there great joy in the court, and in especial King Arthur and Queen Guenever made great joy of the remnant that were come home, and passing glad was the king and the queen of Sir Launcelot and of Sir Bors. For they had been passing long away in the quest of the Sancgreal. Then, as the book saith, Sir Launcelot began to resort unto Queen Guenever again, and forgat the promise and the perfection that he made in the quest. For, as the book saith, had not Sir Launcelot been in his privy thoughts and in his mind so set inwardly to the queen, as he was in seeming outward to God, there had no knight passed him in the quest of the Sancgreal: but ever his thoughts were privily on the queen, and so they loved together more hotter than they did toforehand, that many in the court spake of it, and in especial Sir Agravaine, Sir Gawaine's brother, for he was ever open mouthed.

Thus it passed forth till our Lady day, Assumption.

Within a fifteen days of that feast the king let cry a great justs and a tournament that should be at that day at Camelot, that is Winchester. And the king let cry that he and the king of Scots would just against all that would come against them. And when this cry was made, thither came many knights. So there came thither the king of Northgalis, and King Anguish of Ireland, and the king with the hundred knights, and Sir Galahalt the haut prince, and the king of Northumberland, and many other noble dukes and earls of divers countries. So King Arthur made him ready to depart to these justs, and would have had the queen with him: but at that time she would not, she said, for she was sick and might not ride at that time. That me repenteth, said the king, for this seven year ye saw not such a fellowship together, except at Whitsuntide, when Galahad departed from the court. Truly, said the queen to the king, ye must hold me excused, I may not be there, and that me repenteth. And many deemed the queen would not be there because of Sir Launcelot du Lake, for Sir Launcelot would not ride with the king: for he said that he was not whole of the wound the which Sir Mador had given him. Wherefore the king was heavy and passing wroth, and so he departed towards Winchester with his fellowship. And so by the way the king lodged in a town called Astolat, that is now in English called Gilford, and there the king lay in the castle.

The king proclaims a tournament at Camelot.

So when the king was departed, the queen called Sir Launcelot unto her, and said, Sir Launcelot, ye are greatly to blame, thus to hold you behind my lord: what

trow ye, what will your enemies and mine say and deem? nought else but see how Sir Launcelot holdeth him ever behind the king, and so doth the queen, for that they would be together; and thus will they say, said the queen to Sir Launcelot, have ye no doubt thereof. Madam, said Sir Launcelot, I allow your wit, it is of late come sin ye were wise; and therefore, madam, as at this time, I will be ruled by your counsel, and this night I will take my rest, and to-morrow by time will take my way toward Winchester. But wit you well, said Sir Launcelot to the queen, that at that justs I will be against the king and all his fellowship. Ye may there do as ye list, said the queen, but by my counsel ye shall not be against your king and your fellowship, for therein be full many hardy knights of your blood, as ye wot well enough, it needeth not to rehearse them. Madam, said Sir Launcelot, I pray you that ye be not displeased with me, for I will take the adventure that God will send me.

Sir Launcelot, on his way to Camelot, comes to Astolat.

And so upon the morn early Sir Launcelot heard mass, and brake his fast, and so took his leave of the queen, and departed. And then he rode so much until he came to Astolat, that is Gilford; and there it happed him in the eventide he came to an old baron's place, that hight Sir Bernard of Astolat. And as Sir Launcelot entered into his lodging, King Arthur espied him as he did walk in a garden beside the castle, how he took his lodging, and knew him full well. It is well, said King Arthur unto the knights that were with him in that garden beside the castle, I have now espied one knight that will play his play at the justs to the which we be gone

toward; I undertake he will do marvels. Who is that, we pray you tell us, said many knights, that were there at that time. Ye shall not wit for me, said the king, at this time. And so the king smiled, and went to his lodging. So when Sir Launcelot was in his lodging, and unarmed him in his chamber, the old baron and hermit came unto him, making his reverence, and welcomed him in the best manner; but the old knight knew not Sir Launcelot. Fair sir, said Sir Launcelot to his host, I would pray you to lend me a shield that were not openly known, for mine is well known. Sir, said his host, ye shall have your desire, for me seemeth ye be one of the likeliest knights of the world, and therefore I shall shew you friendship. Sir, wit you well I have two sons which were but late made knights, and the eldest hight Sir Tirre, and he was hurt that same day that he was made knight, that he may not ride, and his shield ye shall have, for that is not known, I dare say, but here and in no place else. And my youngest son hight Sir Lavaine, and if it please you he shall ride with you unto that justs, and he is of his age strong and wight. For much my heart giveth unto you that ye should be a noble knight, therefore, I pray you tell me your name, said Sir Bernard. As for that, said Sir Launcelot, ye must hold me excused as at this time, and if God give me grace to speed well at the justs I shall come again and tell you. But I pray you, said Sir Launcelot, in any wise let me have your son Sir Lavaine with me, and that I may have his brother's shield. Also this shall be done, said Sir Bernard.

This old baron had a daughter that time that was

called that time the fair maid of Astolat. And ever she beheld Sir Launcelot wonderfully. And, as the book saith, she cast such a love unto Sir Launcelot that she could never withdraw her love, wherefore she died; and her name was Elaine le Blank. So thus as she came to and fro, she was so hot in her love that she besought Sir Launcelot to wear upon him at the justs a token of hers. Fair damsel, said Sir Launcelot, and if I grant you that, ye may say I do more for your love than ever I did for lady or damsel. Then he remembered him that he would go to the justs disguised, and for because he had never afore that time borne no manner of token of no damsel; then he bethought him that he would bear one of her, that none of his blood thereby might know him. And then he said, Fair maiden, I will grant you to wear a token of yours upon my helmet, and therefore what it is shew it me. Sir, she said, it is a red sleeve of mine, of scarlet well embroidered with great pearls. And so she brought it him. So Sir Launcelot received it and said, Never did I erst so much for no damsel. And then Sir Launcelot betook the fair maiden his shield in keeping, and prayed her to keep that until that he came again. And so that night he had merry rest and great cheer. Forever the damsel Elaine was about Sir Launcelot, all the while she might be suffered.

Elaine begs him to wear her token at the justs.

II

THE TOURNAMENT

So upon a day on the morn, King Arthur and all his knights departed; for their king had tarried there three

days to abide his noble knights. And so when the king was riden, Sir Launcelot and Sir Lavaine made them ready for to ride; and either of them had white shields, and the red sleeve Sir Launcelot let carry with him. And so they took their leave at Sir Bernard the old baron, and at his daughter the fair maiden of Astolat. And then they rode so long till they came to Camelot, that time called Winchester. And there was great press of kings, dukes, earls, and barons, and many noble knights. But there Sir Launcelot was lodged privily, by the means of Sir Lavaine, with a rich burg that no man in that town was ware what they were. And so they sojourned there till our Lady day, Assumption, as the great feast should be. So then trumpets blew unto the field, and King Arthur was set on high upon a scaffold, to behold who did best. But, as the French book saith, King Arthur would not suffer Sir Gawaine to go from him, for never had Sir Gawaine the better and Sir Launcelot were in the field; and many times was Sir Gawaine rebuked when Launcelot came into any justs disguised.

Then some of the kings, as King Anguish of Ireland and the king of Scotland, were that time turned upon the side of King Arthur. And then on the other party was the king of Northgalis, and the king with the hundred knights, and the king of Northumberland, and Sir Galahalt the haut prince. But these three kings and this duke were passing weak to hold against King Arthur's party: for with him were the noblest knights of the world. So then they withdrew them either party from other, and every man made him

Of the two parties.

ready in his best manner to do what he might. Then Sir Launcelot made him ready, and put the red sleeve upon his head, and fastened it fast; and so Sir Launcelot and Sir Lavaine departed out of Winchester privily, and rode until a little leaved wood, behind the party that held against King Arthur's party, and there they held them still till the parties smote together.

King Arthur's is the stronger.

And then came in the king of Scots and the king of Ireland on Arthur's party: and against them came the king of Northumberland and the king with the hundred knights; and the king with the hundred knights smote down King Anguish of Ireland. Then Sir Palamides, that was on Arthur's party, encountered with Sir Galahalt, and either of them smote down other, and either party halp their lords on horseback again. So there began a strong assail upon both parties. And then there came in Sir Brandiles, Sir Sagramor le Desirous, Sir Dodinas le Savage, Sir Kay le Seneschal, Sir Griflet le Fise de Dieu, Sir Mordred, Sir Meliot de Logris, Sir Ozanna le Cure Hardy, Sir Safere, Sir Epinogris, and Sir Galleron of Galway. All these fifteen knights were knights of the Round Table. So these with more others came in together, and beat on back the king of Northumberland, and the king of North Wales. When Sir Launcelot saw this, as he hoved in a little leaved wood, then he said unto Sir Lavaine, See yonder is a company of good knights, and they hold them together as boars that were chafed with dogs. That is truth, said Sir Lavaine.

Now, said Sir Launcelot, and ye will help me a little, ye shall see yonder fellowship which chaseth now these

men in our side, that they shall go as fast backward as they went forward. Sir, spare not, said Sir Lavaine, for I shall do what I may. Then Sir Launcelot and Sir Lavaine came in at the thickest of the press, and there Sir Launcelot smote down Sir Brandiles, Sir Sagramor, Sir Dodinas, Sir Kay, Sir Griflet, and all this he did with one spear. And Sir Lavaine smote down Sir Lucan le Buttelere, and Sir Bedivere. And then Sir Launcelot gat another spear, and there he smote down Sir Agravaine, Sir Gaheris, and Sir Mordred, and Sir Meliot de Logis. And Sir Lavaine smote down Ozanna le Cure Hardy: and then Sir Launcelot drew his sword, and there he smote on the right hand and on the left hand, and by great force he unhorsed Sir Safere, Sir Epinogris, and Sir Galleron. And then the knights of the Round Table withdrew them aback, after they had gotten their horses as well as they might. O mercy, said Sir Gawaine, what knight is yonder, that doth so marvelous deeds of arms in that field? I wot what he is, said King Arthur. But as at this time I will not name him. Sir, said Sir Gawaine, I would say it were Sir Launcelot, by his riding and his buffets that I see him deal: but ever me seemeth it should not be he, for that he beareth the red sleeve upon his head, for I wist him never bear token, at no justs, of lady nor gentlewoman. Let him be, said King Arthur, he will be better known and do more or ever he depart. Then the party that were against King Arthur were well comforted, and then they held them together, that beforehand were sore rebuked.

Sir Launcelot helps the weaker side.

Then Sir Bors, Sir Ector de Maris, and Sir Lionel

called unto them the knights of their blood, as Sir Blamor de Ganis, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Aliduke, Sir Galihud, Sir Galihodin, Sir Bellangere le Beuse; so these nine knights of Sir Launcelot's kin thrust in mightily, for they were all noble knights. And they, of great hate and despite that they had unto him, thought to rebuke that noble knight Sir Launcelot and Sir Lavaine, for they knew them not. And so they came hurtling together, and smote down many knights of Northgalis and of Northumberland. And when Sir Launcelot saw them fare so, he gat a spear in his hand, and there encountered with him all at once Sir Bors, Sir Ector, and Sir Lionel, and all they three smote him at once with their spears. And with force of themselves they smote Sir Launcelot's horse to the earth. And by misfortune Sir Bors smote Sir Launcelot through the shield into the side, and the spear brake, and the head left still in his side.

He is sore wounded by Sir Bors,

When Sir Lavaine saw his master lie on the ground, he ran to the king of Scots, and smote him to the earth, and by great force he took his horse and brought him to Sir Launcelot, and maugre them all he made him to mount upon that horse. And then Launcelot gat a spear in his hand, and there he smote Sir Bors horse and man to the earth; in the same wise he served Sir Ector and Sir Lionel, and Sir Lavaine smote down Sir Blamor de Ganis. And then Sir Launcelot drew his sword, for he felt himself so sore and hurt that he wend there to have had his death. And then he smote Sir Bleoberis such a buffet on the helmet that he fell down to the earth in

but with the help of Sir Lavaine he gains the day.

a swoon. And in the same wise he served Sir Aliduke and Sir Galihud. And Sir Lavaine smote down Sir Bellangere, that was the son of Alisander le Orphelin. And by this was Sir Bors horsed, and then he came with Sir Ector and Sir Lionel, and all they three smote with swords upon Sir Launcelot's helmet. And when he felt their buffets, and his wound the which was so grievous, then he thought to do what he might while he might endure; and then he gave Sir Bors such a buffet that he made him bow his head passing low, and therewithal he raised off his helm, and might have slain him, and so pulled him down. And in the same wise he served Sir Ector and Sir Lionel. For, as the book saith, he might have slain them, but when he saw their visages his heart might not serve him thereto, but left them there.

And then afterward he hurled in the thickest press of them all, and did there the marvelousest deeds of arms that ever man saw or heard speak of; and ever Sir Lavaine the good knight with him. And there Sir Launcelot with his sword smote and pulled down, as the French book maketh mention, more than thirty knights, and the most party were of the Round Table. And Sir Lavaine did full well that day, for he smote down ten knights of the Round Table.

Mercy, said Sir Gawaine to Arthur, I marvel what knight that he is with the red sleeve. Sir, said King Arthur, he will be known or he depart. And then the king blew unto lodging, and the prize was given by heralds unto the knight with the white shield, that bare the red sleeve. Then came the king with the hundred

knights, the king of Northgalis, and the king of Northumberland, and Sir Galahalt the haut prince, and said unto Sir Launcelot, Fair knight, God thee bless, for much have ye done this day for us; therefore we pray you that ye will come with us, that ye may receive the honor and the prize as ye have worshipfully deserved it. My fair lords, said Sir Launcelot, wit you well, if I have deserved thank I have sore bought it, and that me repenteth, for I am like never to escape with my life; therefore, fair lords, I pray you that ye will suffer me to depart where me liketh, for I am sore hurt. I take none force of none honor, for I had lever to repose me than to be lord of all the world.

Sir Launcelot being in peril of death

And therewithal he groaned piteously, and rode a great wallop away-ward from them, until he came under a wood's side; and when he saw that he was from the field nigh a mile, that he was sure he might not be seen, then he said with an high voice, O gentle knight Sir Lavaine, help me that this truncheon were out of my side, for it sticketh so sore that it nigh slayeth me. O mine own lord, said Sir Lavaine, I would fain do that might please you, but I dread me sore, and I draw out the truncheon, that ye shall be in peril of death. I charge you, said Sir Launcelot, as ye love me draw it out. And therewithal he descended from his horse, and right so did Sir Lavaine, and forewith Sir Lavaine drew the truncheon out of his side. And he gave a great shriek, and a marvelous grisly groan, and his blood brast out nigh a pint at once, that at last he sank down, and so swooned pale and deadly. Alas, said Sir Lavaine, what shall I

do? And then he turned Sir Launcelot into the wind, but so he lay there nigh half an hour as he had been dead.

And so at the last Sir Launcelot cast up his eyes, and said, O Lavaine, help me that I were on my horse, for here is fast by within this two mile a gentle hermit, that sometime was a full noble knight and a great lord of possessions: and for great goodness he hath taken him to willful poverty, and forsaken many lands, and his name is Sir Baudewin of Brittany, and he is a full noble surgeon, and a good leech. Now let see, help me up that I were there. For ever my heart giveth me that I shall never die of my cousin-german's hands. And then with great pain Sir Lavaine halp him upon his horse; and then they rode a great wallop together, and ever Sir Launcelot bled that it ran down to the earth. And so by fortune they came to that hermitage, which was under a wood, and a great cliff on the other side, and a fair water running under it. And then Sir Lavaine beat on the gate with the butt of his spear, and cried fast, Let in for Jesu's sake. And there came a fair child to them, and asked them what they would? Fair son, said Sir Lavaine, go and pray thy lord the hermit for God's sake to let in here a knight that is full sore wounded, and this day tell thy lord that I saw him do more deeds of arms than ever I heard say that any man did. So the child went in lightly, and then he brought the hermit, the which was a passing good man. So when Sir Lavaine saw him, he prayed him for God's sake of succor. What knight is he? said the hermit; is he of the house of King Arthur or not? I wot not, said Sir Lavaine, what is he, nor what is his

is brought by Sir Lavaine to a hermitage.

name, but well I wot I saw him do marvelously this day, as of deeds of arms. On whose party was he? said the hermit. Sir, said Sir Lavaine, he was this day against King Arthur, and there he wan the prize of all the knights of the Round Table. I have seen the day, said the hermit, I would have loved him the worse because he was against my lord King Arthur, for sometime I was one of the fellowship of the Round Table, but I thank God now I am otherwise disposed. But where is he? let me see him. Then Sir Lavaine brought the hermit to him.

And when the hermit beheld him as he sat leaning upon his saddle-bow, ever bleeding piteously, and ever the knight hermit thought that he should know him, but he could not bring him to knowledge, because he was so pale for bleeding, What knight are ye? said the hermit, and where were ye born? My fair lord, said Sir Launcelot, I am a stranger, and a knight adventurous that laboreth throughout many realms for to win worship. Then the hermit advised him better, and saw by a wound on his cheek that he was Sir Launcelot. Alas, said the hermit, mine own lord, why hide you your name from me: forsooth I ought to know you of right, for ye are the most noblest knight of the world; for well I know you for Sir Launcelot. Sir, said he, sith ye know me, help me and ye may, for God's sake; for I would be out of this pain at once, either to death or to life. Have ye no doubt, said the hermit, ye shall live and fare right well. And so the hermit called to him two of his servants, and so he and his servants bare him into the hermitage, and lightly unarmed him and laid him in his bed. And then anon the hermit stanched his blood, and made him to

drink good wine, so that Sir Launcelot was well refreshed, and knew himself. For in those days it was not the guise of hermits as is nowadays. For there were none hermits in those days but that they had been men of worship and of prowess, and those hermits held great household, and refreshed people that were in distress.

III

HOW LAUNCELOT WAS HEALED OF HIS WOUND

Now turn we unto King Arthur, and leave we Sir Launcelot in the hermitage. So when the kings were come together on both parties, and the great feast should be holden, King Arthur asked the king of Northgalis and their fellowship where was that knight that bare the red sleeve: — Bring him before me, that he may have his laud and honor and the prize, as it is right. Then spake Sir Galahalt the haut prince and the king with the hundred knights: We suppose that knight is mischieved, and that he is never like to see you, nor none of us all, and that is the greatest pity that ever we wist of any knight. Alas, said Arthur, how may this be? is he so hurt? What is his name? said King Arthur. Truly, said they all, we know not his name, nor from whence he came, nor whither he would. Alas, said the king, these be to me the worst tidings that came to me this seven year: for I would not for all the lands I hold, to know and wit it were so that that noble knight were slain. Know ye him? said they all. As for that, said Arthur, whether I know him or know him not, ye shall not know

Sir Gawaine seeks for the knight of the red sleeve.

for me what man he is, but Almighty Jesu send me good tidings of him. And so said they all. By my head, said Sir Gawaine, if it be so, that the good knight be so sore hurt, it is great damage and pity to all this land, for he is one of the noblest knights that ever I saw in a field handle a spear or a sword. And if he may be found I shall find him, for I am sure he is not far from this town. Bear you well, said King Arthur, and ye may find him, unless that he be in such a plight that he may not hold himself. Jesu defend, said Sir Gawaine, but wit I shall what he is, and I may find him. Right so, Sir Gawaine took a squire with him, upon hackneys, and rode all about Camelot within six or seven miles. But so he came again, and could hear no word of him.

Then within two days King Arthur and all the fellowship returned unto London again. And so as they rode by the way, it happed Sir Gawaine at Astolat to lodge with Sir Bernard, there as was Sir Launcelot lodged. And so as Sir Gawaine was in his chamber to repose him, Sir Bernard the old baron came unto him, and his daughter Elaine, for to cheer him, and to ask him what tidings, and who did best at that tournament of Winchester. Truly, said Sir Gawaine, there were two knights that bare two white shields; but the one of them bare a red sleeve upon his head, and certainly he was one of the best knights that ever I saw just in field. For I dare say, said Sir Gawain, that one knight with the red sleeve smote down forty valiant knights of the Round Table, and his fellow did right well and worshipfully. Now blessed be God, said the fair maiden of Astolat, that that knight sped so well,

Sir Gawaine comes to Astolat,

for he is the man in the world that I first loved, and truly he shall be the last that ever I shall love. Now fair maid, said Sir Gawaine, is that good knight your love? Certainly, sir, said she, wit ye well he is my love. Then know ye his name, said Sir Gawaine. Nay, truly, said the damsel, I know not his name, nor from whence he cometh; but to say that I love him, I promise you and God that I love him. How had ye knowledge of him first? said Sir Gawaine.

Then she told him as ye have heard tofore, and how her father betook him her brother to do him service, and how her father lent him her brother Sir Tirre's shield, — And here with me he left his own shield. For what cause did he so? said Sir Gawaine. For this cause, said the damsel, for his shield was too well known among many noble knights. Ah, fair damsel, said Sir Gawaine, please it you let me have a sight of that shield. Sir, said she, it is in my chamber covered with a case, and if ye will come with me, ye shall see it. Not so, said Sir Bernard till his daughter, let send for it. So when the shield was come, Sir Gawaine took off the case: and when he beheld that shield, he knew anon that it was Sir Launcelot's shield, and his own arms. Ah, mercy, said Sir Gawaine, now is my heart more heavier than ever it was tofore. Why? said Elaine. For I have great cause, said Sir Gawaine: is that knight that owneth this shield your love? Yea truly, said she, my love he is, God would I were his love. Truly, said Sir Gawaine, fair damsel, ye have right, for, and he be your love, ye love the most honorable knight of the world, and the man of most worship.

and recognizes Sir Launcelot's shield.

So me thought ever, said the damsel, for never, or that time, for no knight that ever I saw loved I never none erst. God grant, said Sir Gawaine, that either of you may rejoice other, but that is in a great adventure.

But truly, said Sir Gawaine unto the damsel, ye may say ye have a fair grace, for why, I have known that noble knight this four and twenty year, and never or that day I nor none other knight, I dare make it good, saw nor heard say that ever he bare token or sign of no lady, gentlewoman, nor maiden, at no justs nor tournament. And therefore, fair maiden, said Sir Gawaine, ye are much beholden to him to give him thanks. But I dread me, said Sir Gawaine, that ye shall never see him in this world, and that is great pity that ever was of earthly knight. Alas, said she, how may this be? Is he slain? I say not so, said Sir Gawaine, but wit ye well, he is grievously wounded, by all manner of signs, and by men's sight more likely to be dead then to be on live; and wit ye well he is the noble knight Sir Launcelot, for by this shield I know him. Alas, said the fair maiden of Astolat, how may this be, and what was his hurt? Truly, said Sir Gawaine, the man in the world that loved him best hurt him so; and I dare say, said Sir Gawaine, and that knight that hurt him knew the very certainty that he had hurt Sir Launcelot, it would be the most sorrow that ever came to his heart. Now, fair father, said then Elaine, I require you give me leave to ride and to seek him, or else I wot well I shall go out of my mind, for I shall never stint till that I find him and my brother Sir Lavaine. Do as it liketh you, said her father, for me right sore repenteth of the hurt of that noble knight.

Right so the maid made her ready, and before Sir Gawaine making great dole.

Then on the morn Sir Gawaine came to King Arthur, and told him how he had found Sir Launcelot's shield in the keeping of the fair maiden of Astolat. All that knew I aforehand, said King Arthur, and that caused me I would not suffer you to have ado at the great justs: for I espied, said King Arthur, when he came in till his lodging, full late in the evening in Astolat. But marvel have I, said Arthur, that ever he would bear any sign of any damsel: for, or now, I never heard say nor knew that ever he bare any token of none earthly woman. By my head, said Sir Gawaine, the fair maiden of Astolat loveth him marvelously well; what it meaneth I cannot say; and she is ridden after to seek him. So the king and all came to London, and there Sir Gawaine openly disclosed to all the court that it was Sir Launcelot that justed best. And so leave we them there, and speak we of Sir Launcelot, that lay in great peril.

So as fair Elaine came to Winchester, she sought there all about, and by fortune Sir Lavaine was ridden to play him, to enchafe his horse. And anon as Elaine saw him she knew him, and then she cried on loud until him. And when he heard her, anon he came to her; and then she asked her brother, How did my lord, Sir Launcelot? Who told you, sister, that my lord's name was Sir Launcelot? Then she told him how Sir Gawaine by his shield knew him. So they rode together till that they came to the hermitage, and anon she alight. So Sir Lavaine brought her in to Sir Launcelot. And when she saw

Elaine finds Sir Launcelot at the hermitage,

him lie so sick and pale in his bed, she might not speak, but suddenly she fell to the earth down suddenly in a swoon, and there she lay a great while. And when she was relieved she sighed, and said, My lord Sir Launcelot, alas, why be ye in this plight? and then she swooned again. And then Sir Launcelot prayed Sir Lavaine to take her up, — And bring her to me. And when she came to herself, Sir Launcelot kissed her, and said, Fair maiden, why fare ye thus? Ye put me to pain; wherefore make ye no more such cheer, for, and ye be come to comfort me, ye be right welcome, and of this little hurt that I have, I shall be right hastily whole, by the grace of God. But I marvel, said Sir Launcelot, who told you my name. Then the fair maiden told him all, how Sir Gawaine was lodged with her father, — And there by your shield he discovered your name. Alas, said Sir Launcelot, that me repenteth, that my name is known, for I am sure it will turn unto anger. And then Sir Launcelot compassed in his mind that Sir Gawaine would tell Queen Guenever how he bare the red sleeve, and for whom, that he wist well would turn unto great anger.

and watches him night and day.

So this maiden, Elaine, never went from Sir Launcelot, but watched him day and night, and did such attendance to him that the French book saith there was never woman did more kindlier for man than she. Then Sir Launcelot prayed Sir Lavaine to make espies in Winchester for Sir Bors if he came there, and told him by what tokens he should know him, by a wound in his forehead: For well I am sure, said Sir Launcelot, that Sir Bors will seek me, for he is the same good knight that hurt me.

Now turn we unto Sir Bors de Ganis, that came unto Winchester to seek after his cousin, Sir Launcelot; and so when he came to Winchester, anon there were men that Sir Lavaine had made to lie in a watch for such a man; and anon Sir Lavaine had warning; and then Sir Lavaine came to Winchester, and found Sir Bors, and there he told him what he was, and with whom he was, and what was his name. Now, fair knight, said Sir Bors, I require you that ye will bring me to my lord Sir Launcelot. Sir, said Sir Lavaine, take your horse, and within this hour ye shall see him. And so they departed, and came to the hermitage.

Sir Bors finds his cousin, Sir Launcelot,

And when Sir Bors saw Sir Launcelot lie in his bed, pale and discolored, anon Sir Bors lost his countenance, and for kindness and pity he might not speak, but wept tenderly a great while. And then when he might speak he said thus: O my lord Sir Launcelot, God you bless, and send you hasty recovery; and full heavy am I of my misfortune and of mine unhappiness, for now I may call myself unhappy, and I dread me that God is greatly displeased with me, that he would suffer me to have such a shame for to hurt you, that are all our leader and all our worship, and therefore I call myself unhappy. Alas, that ever such a caitiff knight as I am should have power by unhappiness to hurt the most noblest knight of the world. Where I so shamefully set upon you and overcharged you, and where ye might have slain me, ye saved me, and so did not I: for I, and your blood, did to you our utterance. I marvel, said Sir Bors, that my heart or my blood would

and begs for his forgiveness.

serve me, wherefore my lord Sir Launcelot, I ask your mercy. Fair cousin, said Sir Launcelot, ye be right welcome, and wit ye well, overmuch ye say for to please me, the which pleaseth me not; for why? I have the same sought, for I would with pride have overcome you all, and there in my pride I was near slain, and that was in mine own default, for I might have given you warning of my being there. And then had I had no hurt; for it is an old said saw, there is hard battle there as kin and friends do battle either against other; there may be no mercy, but mortal war. Therefore, fair cousin, said Sir Launcelot, let this speech overpass, and all shall be welcome that God sendeth; and let us leave off this matter, and let us speak of some rejoicing: for this that is done may not be undone, and let us find a remedy how soon that I may be whole.

Then Sir Bors leaned upon his bed's side, and told Sir Launcelot how the queen was passing wroth with him, because he ware the red sleeve at the great justs. And there Sir Bors told him all how Sir Gawaine discovered it by your shield that ye left with the fair maiden of Astolat. Then is the queen wroth, said Sir Launcelot, and therefore am I right heavy, for I deserved no wrath, for all that I did was because that I would not be known. Right so excused I you, said Sir Bors, but all was in vain, for she said more largely to me than I to you now. But is this she, said Sir Bors, that is so busy about you, that men call the fair maiden of Astolat? She it is, said Sir Launcelot, that by no means I cannot put from me. Why should ye put her from you? said Sir Bors, she is a passing fair damsel, and a well beseen and well taught;

and God would, fair cousin, said Sir Bors, that ye could love her, but as to that I may not, nor I dare not, counsel you. But I see well, said Sir Bors, by her diligence about you, that she loveth you entirely. That me repenteth, said Sir Launcelot. Sir, said Sir Bors, she is not the first that hath lost her pain upon you, and that is the more pity. And so they talked of many more things. And so within three days or four, Sir Launcelot was big and strong again. So then they made them ready to depart from the hermit.

IV

LAUNCELOT LEAVES THE HERMIT

And so upon a morn they took their horses, and Elaine le Blank with them; and when they came to Astolat, there they were well lodged, and had great cheer of Sir Bernard the old baron, and of Sir Tirre his son. And so upon the morn, when Sir Launcelot should depart, fair Elaine brought her father with her, and Sir Tirre and Sir Lavaine, and thus she said: —

My lord Sir Launcelot, now I see ye will depart, now, fair knight and courteous knight, have mercy upon me, and suffer me not to die for thy love. What would ye that I did? said Sir Launcelot. I would have you to my husband, said Elaine. Fair damsel, I thank you, said Sir Launcelot, but truly, said he, I cast me never to be wedded man. Then, fair knight, said she, will ye be my love? Jesu defend me, said Sir Launcelot, for then I rewarded to your father and your brother full evil for their

Elaine in vain prays Sir Launcelot for his love.

great goodness. Alas, said she, then must I die for your love. Ye shall not so, said Sir Launcelot, for wit ye well, fair maiden, I might have been married and I had would, but I never applied me to be married yet. But because, fair damsel, that ye love me, as ye say ye do, I will, for your good-will and kindness, shew you some goodness, and that is this; that wheresoever ye will beset your heart upon some good knight that will wed you, I shall give you together a thousand pound yearly, to you and to your heirs. Thus much will I give you, fair maiden, for your kindness, and always while I live to be your own knight. Of all this, said the maiden, I will none, for, but if ye will wed me, or else be my lover, wit you well, Sir Launcelot, my good days are done. Fair damsel, said Sir Launcelot, of these two things ye must pardon me. Then she shrieked shrilly, and fell down in a swoon; and then women bare her into her chamber, and there she made overmuch sorrow.

And then Sir Launcelot would depart; and there he asked Sir Lavaine what he would do. What should I do, said Sir Lavaine, but follow you, but if ye drive me from you, or command me to go from you? Then came Sir Bernard to Sir Launcelot, and said to him, I cannot see but that my daughter Elaine will die for your sake. I may not do withal, said Sir Launcelot, for that me sore repenteth; for I report me to yourself that my proffer is fair, and me repenteth, said Sir Launcelot, that she loveth me as she doth: I was never the causer of it, for I report me to your son, I early nor late proffered her bounty nor fair behests: and as for me, said Sir Launcelot, I dare do all that a good knight should do,

that she is a true maiden, both for deed and for will; and I am right heavy of her distress, for she is a full fair maiden, good, and gentle, and well taught. Father, said Sir Lavaine, I dare make good she is pure and good as my lord Sir Launcelot hath said; but she doth as I do, for since I first saw my lord Sir Launcelot I could never depart from him, nor nought I will and I may follow him.

Then Sir Launcelot took his leave, and so they departed, and came unto Winchester. And when Arthur wist that Sir Launcelot was come, whole and sound, the king made great joy of him, and so did Sir Gawaine, and all the knights of the Round Table except Sir Agravaine and Sir Mordred. Also Queen Guenever was wood wroth with Sir Launcelot and would by no means speak with him, but estranged herself from him, and Sir Launcelot made all the means that he might to speak with the queen, but it would not be.

Sir Launcelot returns to Winchester.

Now speak we of the fair maiden of Astolat, that made such sorrow day and night, that she never slept, eat, nor drank; and ever she made her complaint unto Sir Launcelot. So when she had thus endured a ten days, that she feebled so that she must needs pass out of this world, then she shrived her clean, and received her Creator. And ever she complained still upon Sir Launcelot. Then her ghostly father bade her leave such thoughts. Then she said, Why should I leave such thoughts? am I not an earthly woman? and all the while the breath is in my body I may complain me, for my belief is I do none

Elaine makes such sorrow that she dies.

offense though I love an earthly man, and I take God to my record I never loved none but Sir Launcelot du Lake, nor never shall; and a pure maiden I am for him and for all other. And since it is the sufferance of God that I shall die for the love of so noble a knight, I beseech the High Father of heaven to have mercy upon my soul, and upon mine innumerable pains that I suffered may be allegiance of part of my sins. For sweet Lord Jesu, said the fair maiden, I take thee to record, on thee I was never great offender against thy laws, but that I loved this noble knight Sir Launcelot out of measure, and of myself, good Lord, I might not withstand the fervent love wherefore I have my death. And then she called her father Sir Bernard, and her brother Sir Tirre, and heartily she prayed her father that her brother might write a letter like as she did endite it; and so her father granted her. And when the letter was written word by word like as she devised, then she prayed her father that she might be watched until she were dead, — And while my body is hot let this letter be put in my right hand, and my hand bound fast with the letter until that I be cold, and let me be put in a fair bed, with all the richest clothes that I have about me, and so let my bed, and all my richest clothes, be laid with me in a chariot unto the next place where Thames is, and there let me be put within a barget, and but one man with me, such as ye trust to steer me thither, and that my barget be covered with black samite, over and over. Thus, father, I beseech you, let it be done. So her father granted it her faithfully, all things should be done like as she had devised. Then her father and her brother made great dole, for,

when this was done, anon she died. And so when she was dead, the corpse, and the bed, all was led the next way unto Thames, and there a man, and the corpse, and all, were put into Thames, and so the man steered the barget unto Westminster, and there he rowed a great while to and fro or any espied it.

So by fortune King Arthur and the Queen Guenever were speaking together at a window; and so as they looked into Thames, they espied this black barget, and had marvel what it meant. Then the king called Sir Kay, and shewed it him. Sir, said Sir Kay, wit you well there is some new tidings. Go thither, said the king to Sir Kay, and take with you Sir Brandiles and Agravaine, and bring me ready word what is there. Then these three knights departed, and came to the barget, and went in; and there they found the fairest corpse lying in a rich bed, and a poor man sitting in the barget's end, and no word would he speak. So these three knights returned unto the king again, and told him what they found. That fair corpse will I see, said the king. And so then the king took the queen by the hand and went thither. Then the king made the barget to be holden fast; and then the king and the queen entered, with certain knights with them. And there he saw the fairest woman lie in a rich bed, covered unto her middle with many rich clothes, and all was of cloth of gold, and she lay as though she had smiled.

Her body comes to Westminster.

Then the queen espied a letter in her right hand, and told it to the king. Then the king took it, and said, Now I am sure this letter will tell what she was, and why she is come hither. Then the king and the queen

went out of the barget, and so commanded a certain man to wait upon the barget. And so when the king was come within his chamber, he called many knights about him, and said that he would wit openly what was written within that letter. Then the king brake it, and made a clerk to read it; and this was the intent of the letter: — Most noble knight, Sir Launcelot, now hath death made us two at debate for your love; I was your lover, that men called the fair maiden of Astolat: therefore unto all ladies I make my moan; yet pray for my soul, and bury me at the least, and offer ye my mass-penny. This is my last request. And a clean maiden I died, I take God to witness. Pray for my soul, Sir Launcelot, as thou art peerless. — This was all the substance in the letter. And when it was read, the king, the queen, and all the knights wept for pity of the doleful complaints.

Then was Sir Launcelot sent for. And when he was come, King Arthur made the letter to be read to him; and when Sir Launcelot heard it word by word, he said, My lord Arthur, wit ye well I am right heavy of the death of this fair damsel. God knoweth I was never causer of her death by my willing, and that will I report me to her own brother; here he is, Sir Lavaine. I will not say nay, said Sir Launcelot, but that she was both fair and good, and much I was beholden unto her, but she loved me out of measure. Ye might have shewed her, said the queen, some bounty and gentleness, that might have preserved her life. Madam, said Sir Launcelot, she would none other way be answered, but that she would be my wife,

Sir Launcelot mourns at her death,

or else my love, and of these two I would not grant her; but I proffered her, for her good love that she shewed me, a thousand pound yearly to her and to her heirs, and to wed any manner knight that she could find best to love in her heart. For, madam, said Sir Launcelot, I love not to be constrained to love; for love must arise of the heart, and not by no constraint. That is truth, said the king and many knights: love is free in himself, and never will be bounden; for where he is bounden he loseth himself.

Then said the king unto Sir Launcelot, It will be your worship that ye oversee that she be interred worshipfully. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, that shall be done as I can best devise. And so many knights went thither to behold that fair maiden. And so upon the morn she was interred richly, and Sir Launcelot offered her mass-penny, and all the knights of the Round Table that were there at that time offered with Sir Launcelot. And then the poor man went again with the barget. Then the queen sent for Sir Launcelot, and prayed him of mercy, for why she had been wroth with him causeless. This is not the first time, said Sir Launcelot, that ye have been displeased with me causeless; but, madam, ever I must suffer you, but what sorrow I endure I take no force. So this passed on all that winter, with all manner of hunting and hawking, and justs and tourneys were many betwixt many great lords; and ever in all places Sir Lavaine gat great worship, so that he was nobly renowned among many knights of the Round Table.

and causes her to be buried worshipfully.

THE DEATH OF KING ARTHUR

By Thomas Malory

AS Sir Mordred was ruler of all England, he did so make letters as though that they came from beyond the sea, and the letters specified that King Arthur was slain in battle with Sir Launcelot. Wherefore Sir Mordred made a Parliament, and called the lords together, and there he made them to choose him king, and so was he crowned at Canterbury, and held a feast there fifteen days, and afterward he drew him unto Winchester, and there he took the Queen Guenever, and said plainly, that he would wed her which was his uncle's wife, and his father's wife. And so he made ready for the feast, and a day prefixed that they should be wedded; wherefore Queen Guenever was passing heavy. But she durst not discover her heart, but spake fair, and agreed to Sir Mordred's will. Then she desired of Sir Mordred for to go to London, to buy all manner of things that longed unto the wedding. And because of her fair speech Sir Mordred trusted her well enough, and gave her leave to go. And so when she came to London, she took the tower of London, and suddenly, in all haste possible, she stuffed it with all manner of victual, and well garnished it with men, and so kept it. Then when Sir Mordred wist and understood how he was beguiled, he was passing wroth out of measure. And a short tale for to make, he went and

Sir Mordred rebels.

laid a mighty siege about the tower of London, and made many great assaults thereat, and threw many great engines unto them, and shot great guns. But all might not prevail Sir Mordred, for Queen Guenever would never, for fair speech nor for foul, would never trust to come in his hands again.

And then came the Bishop of Canterbury, the which was a noble clerk and an holy man, and thus he said to Sir Mordred: Sir, what will ye do, will ye first displease God, and sithen shame yourself and all knighthood? Is not King Arthur your uncle, no further but your mother's brother, and are ye not his son, therefore how may ye wed your father's wife? Sir, said the noble clerk, leave this opinion, or else I shall curse you with book, and bell, and candle. Do thou thy worst, said Sir Mordred, wit thou well I shall defy thee. Sir, said the bishop, and wit you well I shall not fear me to do that me ought to do. Also where ye noise where my lord Arthur is slain, and that is not so, and therefore ye will make a foul work in this land. Peace, thou false priest, said Sir Mordred, for, and thou chafe me any more, I shall make strike off thy head. So the bishop departed, and did the curse in the most orgulous wise that might be done. And then Sir Mordred sought the Bishop of Canterbury for to have slain him. Then the bishop fled, and took part of his goods with him, and went nigh unto Glastonbury, and there he was as priest hermit in a chapel, and lived in poverty and in holy prayers: for well he understood that mischievous war was at hand.

The bishop curses Sir Mordred.

Then Sir Mordred sought on Queen Guenever by let-

ters and sondes, and by fair means and foul means, for to have her to come out of the tower of London; but all this availed not, for she answered him shortly, openly and privily, that she had lever slay herself than to be married with him. Then came word to Sir Mordred that King Arthur had raised the siege from Sir Launcelot, and he was coming homeward with a great host, to be avenged upon Sir Mordred. Wherefore Sir Mordred made write writs to all the barony of this land, and much people drew to him. For then was the common voice among them, that with Arthur was none other life but war and strife, and with Sir Mordred was great joy and bliss. Thus was Sir Arthur depraved and evil said of. And many there were that King Arthur had made up of nought, and given them lands, might not then say of him a good word.

Lo ye, all Englishmen, see ye not what a mischief here was, for he that was the most king and knight of the world, and most loved the fellowship of noble knights, and by him they were all upholden, now might not we Englishmen hold us content with him. Lo, thus was the old custom and usage of this land. And also men say, that we of this land have not yet lost nor forgotten that custom and usage. Alas, this is a great default of us Englishmen, for there may no thing please us no term. And so fared the people at that time; they were better pleased with Sir Mordred than they were with King Arthur, and much people drew unto Sir Mordred, and said they would abide with him for better and for worse. And so Sir Mordred drew with a great host to Dover, for there he heard say that Sir Arthur would arrive, and so

he thought to beat his own father from his lands. And the most party of all England held with Sir Mordred, the people were so new fangle.

And so as Sir Mordred was at Dover with his host, there came King Arthur with a great navy of ships, galleys, and carracks. And there was Sir Mordred ready awaiting upon his landage, to let his own father to land upon the land that he was king over. Then there was launching of great boats and small, and full of noble men of arms, and there was much slaughter of gentle knights, and many a full bold baron was laid full low on both parties. But King Arthur was so courageous, that there might no manner of knights let him to land, and his knights fiercely followed him. And so they landed, maugre Sir Mordred and all his power, and put Sir Mordred aback, that he fled and all his people. So when this battle was done, King Arthur let bury his people that were dead, and then was the noble knight Sir Gawaine found in a great boat lying more than half dead. When Sir Arthur wist that Sir Gawaine was laid so low, he went unto him, and there the king made sorrow out of measure, and took Sir Gawaine in his arms, and thrice he there swooned. And when he awaked he said, Alas, Sir Gawaine, my sister's son, here now thou liest, the man in the world that I loved most, and now is my joy gone: for now, my nephew Sir Gawaine, I will discover me unto your person; in Sir Launcelot and you I most had my joy, and mine affiance, and now have I lost my joy of you both, wherefore all mine earthly joy is gone from me. Mine uncle King

King Arthur lands at Dover, and Sir Gawaine is mortally wounded.

Arthur, said Sir Gawaine, wit you well, my death-day is come, and all is through mine own hastiness and willfulness, for I am smitten upon the old wound the which Sir Launcelot gave me, on the which I feel well I must die; and had Sir Launcelot been with you as he was, this unhappy war had never begun, and of all this am I causer, for Sir Launcelot and his blood through their prowess held all your cankered enemies in subjection and danger: and now, said Sir Gawaine, ye shall miss Sir Launcelot. But, alas, I would not accord with him, and therefore, said Sir Gawaine, I pray you, fair uncle, that I may have paper, pen, and ink, that I may write to Sir Launcelot a schedule with mine own hands.

And then when paper and ink was brought, then Gawaine was set up weakly by King Arthur, for he was shriven a little tofore, and then he wrote thus, as the French book maketh mention, — Unto Sir Launcelot, flower of all noble knights that ever I heard of, or saw by my days, I Sir Gawaine, King Lot's son, of Orkney, sister's son unto the noble King Arthur, send thee greeting, and let thee have knowledge, that the tenth day of May I was smitten upon the old wound that thou gavest me afore the city of Benwick, and through the same wound that thou gavest me I am come to my death-day. And I will that all the world wit that I, Sir Gawaine, knight of the Round Table, sought my death, and not through thy deserving, but it was mine own seeking; wherefore I beseech thee, Sir Launcelot, to return again unto this realm, and see my tomb, and pray some prayer, more or less, for my soul. And this

Before his death Sir Gawaine writes a schedule to Sir Launcelot.

same day that I wrote this schedule, I was hurt to the death in the same wound, the which I had of thy hand, Sir Launcelot. For of a more nobler man might I not be slain. Also, Sir Launcelot, for all the love that ever was betwixt us, make no tarrying, but come over the sea in all haste, that thou mayest with thy noble knights rescue that noble king that made thee knight, that is my lord Arthur; for he is full straitly bestad with a false traitor, that is my half brother, Sir Mordred, and he hath let crown him king, and would have wedded my lady Queen Guenever, and so had he done, had she not put herself in the tower of London. And so the tenth day of May last past, my lord Arthur and we all landed upon them at Dover, and there we put that false traitor Sir Mordred to flight, and there it misfortuned me to be stricken upon thy stroke, and at the date of this letter was written but two hours and an half afore my death, written with mine own hand, and so subscribed with part of my heart's blood. And I require thee, most famous knight of the world, that thou wilt see my tomb. — And then Sir Gawaine wept, and King Arthur wept, and then they swooned both. And when they awaked both, the king made Sir Gawaine to receive his Saviour. And then Sir Gawaine prayed the king to send for Sir Launcelot, and to cherish him above all other knights. And so at the hour of noon, Sir Gawaine yielded up the spirit. And then the king let inter him in a chapel within Dover castle; and there yet all men may see the skull of him, and the same wound is seen that Sir Launcelot gave him in battle.

Then was it told King Arthur that Sir Mordred had

pitched a new field upon Barham Down. And upon the morn the king rode thither to him, and there was a great battle betwixt them, and much people were slain on both parties. But at the last Sir Arthur's party stood best, and Sir Mordred and his party fled unto Canterbury. And then the king let search all the towns for his knights that were slain, and interred them; and salved them with soft salves that so sore were wounded. Then much people drew unto King Arthur. And then they said that Sir Mordred warred upon King Arthur with wrong. And then King Arthur drew him with his host down by the seaside, westward toward Salisbury, and there was a day assigned between King Arthur and Sir Mordred, and they should meet upon a down beside Salisbury, and not far from the seaside, and this day was assigned on Monday after Trinity Sunday, whereof King Arthur was passing glad, that he might be avenged upon Sir Mordred. Then Sir Mordred araised much people about London, for they of Kent, Southsex, and Surrey, Estsex, and Southfolk, and of Norfolk, held the most party with Sir Mordred, and many a full noble knight drew unto Sir Mordred and to the king; but they that loved Sir Launcelot drew unto Sir Mordred.

The battle of Barham Down.

So upon Trinity Sunday at night King Arthur dreamed a wonderful dream, and that was this, that him seemed he sat upon a chaflet in a chair, and the chair was fast to a wheel, and thereupon sat King Arthur in the richest cloth of gold that might be made: and the king thought there was under him, far from him, an hideous deep black water, and therein were

King Arthur's dream.

all manner of serpents, and worms, and wild beasts, foul and horrible: and suddenly the king thought the wheel turned up so down, and he fell among the serpents, and every beast took him by a limb. And then the king cried as he lay in his bed and slept, Help! And then knights, squires, and yeomen awaked the king; and then he was so amazed that he wist not where he was. And then he fell on slumbering again, not sleeping nor thoroughly waking. So the king seemed verily that there came Sir Gawaine unto him, with a number of fair ladies with him. And when King Arthur saw him, then he said, Welcome, my sister's son, I wend thou hadst been dead, and now I see thee on live, much am I beholding unto Almighty Jesu. Oh, fair nephew, and my sister's son, what be these ladies that hither be come with you? Sir, said Sir Gawaine, all these be ladies for whom I have foughten when I was man living: and all these are those that I did battle for in righteous quarrel. And God hath given them that grace at their great prayer, because I did battle for them, that they should bring me hither unto you, thus much had God given me leave, for to warn you of your death; for and ye fight as to-morn with Sir Mordred, as ye both have assigned, doubt ye not ye must be slain, and the most part of your people on both parties. And for the great grace and goodness that Almighty Jesu hath unto you, and for pity of you and many more other good men there shall be slain, God hath sent me to you, of his special grace, to give you warning, that in no wise ye do battle as to-morn, but that ye take a treaty for a month day; and proffer you largely, so as to-morn to be put in a delay. For within

a month shall come Sir Launcelot, with all his noble knights, and rescue you worshipfully, and slay Sir Mordred and all that ever will hold with him. Then Sir Gawaine and all the ladies vanished.

A truce is proposed.

And anon the king called upon his knights, squires, and yeomen, and charged them wightly to fetch his noble lords and wise bishops unto him. And when they were come, the king told them his vision, what Sir Gawaine had told him, and warned him that if he fought on the morn he should be slain. Then the king commanded Sir Lucan de Butlere, and his brother Sir Bedivere, with two bishops with them, and charged them in any wise and they might take a treaty for a month day with Sir Mordred; — And spare not, proffer him lands and goods, as much as ye think best. So then they departed, and came to Sir Mordred, where he had a grim host of an hundred thousand men. And there they entreated Sir Mordred long time, and at the last Sir Mordred was agreed for to have Cornwall and Kent, by King Arthur's days: — after, all England, after the days of King Arthur.

At the conference an adder causes the battle to begin.

Then were they condescended that King Arthur and Sir Mordred should meet betwixt both their hosts, and every each of them should bring fourteen persons. And they came with this word unto King Arthur. Then said he, I am glad that this is done. And so he went into the field. And when Arthur should depart, he warned all his host that and they see any sword drawn, Look ye come on fiercely, and slay that traitor Sir Mordred, for I in no wise trust him. In like wise Sir Mordred warned his

host that, — And ye see any sword drawn, look that ye come on fiercely, and so slay all that ever before you standeth: for in no wise I will not trust for this treaty: for I know well my father will be avenged upon me. And so they met as their pointment was, and so they were agreed and accorded thoroughly: and wine was fetched, and they drank. Right so came an adder out of a little heath bush, and it stung a knight on the foot. And when the knight felt him stungen, he looked down and saw the adder, and then he drew his sword to slay the adder, and thought of none other harm. And when the host on both parties saw that sword drawn, then they blew beames, trumpets, and horns, and shouted grimly. And so both hosts dressed them together.

And King Arthur took his horse, and said, Alas this unhappy day, and so rode to his party: and Sir Mordred in likewise. And never was there seen a more dolefuller battle in no Christian land. The battle. For there was but rushing and riding, foining and striking, and many a grim word was there spoken either to other, and many a deadly stroke. But ever King Arthur rode throughout the battle of Sir Mordred many times, and did full nobly as a noble king should: and at all times he fainted never. And Sir Mordred that day put him in devoir, and in great peril. And thus they fought all the long day, and never stinted, till the noble knights were laid to the cold ground; and ever they fought still, till it was near night, and by that time was there an hundred thousand laid dead upon the down. Then was Arthur wroth out of measure, when he saw his people so slain from him. Then the king looked

about him, and then was he ware of all his host, and of all his good knights, were left no more on live but two knights, that was Sir Lucan de Butlere, and his brother Sir Bedivere: and they full were sore wounded. Jesu mercy, said the king, where are all my noble knights becomen. Alas that ever I should see this doleful day. For now, said Arthur, I am come to mine end. But would to God that I wist where were that traitor Sir Mordred, that hath caused all this mischief.

Then was King Arthur ware where Sir Mordred leaned upon his sword among a great heap of dead men. Now give me my spear, said Arthur unto Sir Lucan, for yonder I have espied the traitor that all this woe hath wrought. Sir, let him be, said Sir Lucan, for he is unhappy: and if ye pass this unhappy day, ye shall be right well revenged upon him. Good lord, remember ye of your night's dream, and what the spirit of Sir Gawaine told you this night; yet God of his great goodness hath preserved you hitherto. Therefore, for God's sake, my lord, leave off by this. For blessed be God ye have won the field: for here we be three on live, and with Sir Mordred is none on live. And if ye leave off now, this wicked day of destiny is past. Tide me death, betide me life, saith the king, now I see him yonder alone; he shall never escape mine hands, for at a better avail shall I never have him. God speed you well, said Sir Bedivere. Then the king gat his spear in both his hands, and ran toward Sir Mordred, crying, Traitor, now is thy death-day come. And when Sir Mordred heard Sir Arthur, he ran until him with his

King Arthur slays Sir Mordred, and is wounded to the death by him.

sword drawn in his hand. And then King Arthur smote Sir Mordred under the shield, with a foin of his spear throughout the body more than a fathom. And when Sir Mordred felt that he had his death's wound, he thrust himself, with the might that he had, up to the bur of King Arthur's spear. And right so he smote his father Arthur with his sword holden in both his hands, on the side of the head, that the sword pierced the helmet and the brain-pan, and therewithal Sir Mordred fell stark dead to the earth. And the noble Arthur fell in a swoon to the earth, and there he swooned ofttimes.

And Sir Lucan de Butlere and Sir Bedivere ofttimes heaved him up, and so weakly they led him betwixt them both to a little chapel not far from the seaside. And when the king was there, he thought him well eased. Then heard they people cry in the field. Now go thou, Sir Lucan, said the king, and do me to wit what betokens that noise in the field. So Sir Lucan departed, for he was grievously wounded in many places. And so as he went, he saw and hearkened by the moonlight, how the pillers and robbers were come into the field to pill and to rob many a full noble knight of brooches and beads, of many a good ring, and of many a rich jewel; and who that were not dead all out, there they slew them for their harness and their riches. When Sir Lucan understood this work, he came to the king as soon as he might, and told him all what he had heard and seen. Therefore by mine advice, said Sir Lucan, it is best that we bring you to some town. I

Sir Lucan and Sir Bedivere carry King Arthur to a chapel.

would it were so, said the king, but I may not stand, my head werches so. Ah, Sir Launcelot, said King Arthur, this day have I sore missed thee. Alas, that ever I was against thee, for now have I my death, whereof Sir Gawaine me warned in my dream. Then Sir Lucan took up the king the one part, and Sir Bedivere the other part, and in the lifting, the king swooned, and Sir Lucan fell in a swoon with the lift, and therewith the noble knight's heart brast. And when King Arthur came to himself again, he beheld Sir Lucan how he lay foaming at the mouth. Alas, said the king, this is unto me a full heavy sight to see this noble duke so die for my sake, for he would have holpen me that had more need of help than I. Alas, he would not complain him, his heart was so set to help me. Now Jesu, have mercy upon his soul. Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of his brother.

Sir Bedivere and the sword Excalibur.

Leave this mourning and weeping, said the king, for all this will not avail me: for, wit thou well, and I might live myself the death of Sir Lucan would grieve me evermore; but my time hieth fast, said the king. Therefore, said Arthur, take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it to yonder waterside; when thou comest there, I charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again, and tell me what thou there seest. My lord, said Bedivere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly bring you word again. So Sir Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and haft were all of precious stones, and then he said to himself, If I throw this rich sword in the

water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And as soon as he might he came again unto the king, and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword into the water. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but waves and winds. That is untruly said of thee, said the king, therefore go thou lightly again, and do my command as thou art to me lief and dear; spare not, but throw it in. Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand; and then him thought sin and shame to throw away that noble sword; and so eft he hid the sword, and returned again, and told to the king that he had been at the water, and done his commandment. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but the waters wap and the waves wan. Ah traitor, untrue, said King Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would have wend that thou that hast been to me so lief and dear, and thou art named a noble knight, and would betray me for the riches of the sword. But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands, for thou wouldest for my rich sword see me dead.

Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword, and lightly took it up, and went to the waterside, and there he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword as far into the water as he might, and there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and bran-

dished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long.

Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that waterside. And when they were at the waterside, even fast by the bank hoved a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen; and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king: and so he did softly. And there received him three queens with great mourning; and so they set him down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head, and then that queen said, Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas, this wound on your head hath caught over much cold. And so then they rowed from the land; and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried, Ah, my lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies. Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in. For I will into the vale of Avilion, to heal me of my grievous wound. And if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul. But ever the queens and the ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear. And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took the forest; and so he went all that night, and in the morning he was ware betwixt two holts hoar of a chapel and an hermitage.

Sir Bedivere places Arthur in a barge which bears him from the land.

THERE RECEIVED HIM THREE QUEENS WITH GREAT MOURNING

Then was Sir Bedivere glad, and thither he went; and when he came into the chapel, he saw where lay an hermit groveling on all four, there fast by a tomb was new graven. When the hermit saw Sir Bedivere, he knew him well, for he was but a little before Bishop of Canterbury, that Sir Mordred banished. Sir, said Sir Bedivere, what man is there interred that ye pray so fast for? Fair son, said the hermit, I wot not verily, but by deeming. But this night, at midnight, here came a number of ladies, and brought hither a dead corpse, and prayed me to bury him; and here they offered an hundred tapers, and gave me an hundred besants. Alas, said Sir Bedivere, that was my lord King Arthur, that here lieth buried in this chapel! Then Sir Bedivere swooned, and when he awoke he prayed the hermit he might abide with him still there, to live with fasting and prayers. For from hence will I never go, said Sir Bedivere, by my will, but all the days of my life here to pray for my lord Arthur. Ye are welcome to me, said the hermit, for I know you better than ye ween that I do. Ye are the bold Bedivere, and the full noble duke Sir Lucan de Butlere was your brother. Then Sir Bedivere told the hermit all as ye have heard tofore. So there bode Sir Bedivere with the hermit, that was tofore Bishop of Canterbury; and there Sir Bedivere put upon him poor clothes, and served the hermit full lowly in fasting and in prayers.

King Arthur's tomb.

Thus of Arthur I find never more written in books that be authorized, nor more of the certainty of his death heard I never tell, but thus was he led away in a ship wherein were three queens; that one was King Arthur's

sister, Queen Morgan le Fay; the other was the queen of Northgalis; the third was the queen of the Waste Lands. Also there was Nimue, the chief Lady of the lake, that had wedded Pelleas the good knight; and this lady had done much for King Arthur; for she would never suffer Sir Pelleas to be in no place where he should be in danger of his life, and so he lived to the uttermost of his days with her in great rest. More of the death of King Arthur could I never find, but that ladies brought him to his burials; and such one was buried there, that the hermit bare witness that some time was Bishop of Canterbury, but yet the hermit knew not in certain that he was verily the body of King Arthur; — for this tale Sir Bedivere, knight of the Round Table, made it to be written.

Yet some men yet say in many parts of England that King Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu in another place. And men say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross. I will not say it shall be so, but rather I will say, here in this world he changed his life. But many men say that there is written upon his tomb this verse,

Hic iacet Arthurus Rex quondam Rexque futurus.

OWAIN AND THE LADY OF THE FOUNTAIN

By Thomas Bulfinch

KING ARTHUR was at Caerleon upon Usk; and one day he sat in his chamber, and with him were Owain the son of Urien, and Kynon the son of Clydno, and Kay the son of Kyner, and Guenever and her handmaidens at needlework by the window. In the centre of the chamber King Arthur sat upon a seat of green rushes, over which was spread a covering of flame-colored satin, and a cushion of red satin was under his elbow.

Then Arthur spoke. "If I thought you would not disparage me," said he, "I would sleep while I wait for my repast; and you can entertain one another with relating tales, and can obtain a flagon of mead and some meat from Kay." And the king went to sleep. And Kynon the son of Clydno asked Kay for that which Arthur had promised them. "I too will have the good tale which he promised me," said Kay. "Nay," answered Kynon; "fairer will it be for thee to fulfill Arthur's behest in the first place, and then we will tell thee the best tale that we know." So Kay went to the kitchen and to the mead-cellar, and returned, bearing a flagon of mead, and a golden goblet, and a handful of skewers,

upon which were broiled collops of meat. Then they ate the collops, and began to drink the mead. "Now," said Kay, "it is time for you to give me my story." "Kynon," said Owain, "do thou pay to Kay the tale that is his due." "I will do so," answered Kynon.

"I was the only son of my mother and father, and I was exceedingly aspiring, and my daring was very great. I thought there was no enterprise in the world too mighty for me; and after I had achieved all the adventures that were in my own country, I equipped myself, and set forth to journey through deserts and distant regions. And at length it chanced that I came to the fairest valley in the world, wherein were trees all of equal growth; and a river ran through the valley, and a path was by the side of the river. And I followed the path until midday, and continued my journey along the remainder of the valley until the evening; and at the extremity of a plain I came to a large and lustrous castle, at the foot of which was a torrent. And I approached the castle, and there I beheld two youths with yellow curling hair, each with a frontlet of gold upon his head, and clad in a garment of yellow satin; and they had gold clasps upon their insteps. In the hand of each of them was an ivory bow, strung with the sinews of the stag, and their arrows and their shafts were of the bone of the whale, and were winged with peacocks' feathers. The shafts also had golden heads. And they had daggers with blades of gold, and with hilts of the bone of the whale. And they were shooting at a mark.

"And a little way from them I saw a man in the prime of life, with his beard newly shorn, clad in a robe and

mantle of yellow satin, and round the top of his mantle was a band of gold lace. On his feet were shoes of variegated leather, fastened by two bosses of gold. When I saw him I went towards him and saluted him; and such was his courtesy, that he no sooner received my greeting than he returned it. And he went with me towards the castle. Now there were no dwellers in the castle, except those who were in one hall. And there I saw four and twenty damsels, embroidering satin at a window. And this I tell thee, Kay, that the least fair of them was fairer than the fairest maid thou didst ever behold in the island of Britain; and the least lovely of them was more lovely than Guenever, the wife of Arthur, when she appeared loveliest, at the feast of Easter. They rose up at my coming, and six of them took my horse, and divested me of my armor; and six others took my arms, and washed them in a vessel till they were perfectly bright. And the third six spread cloths upon the tables, and prepared meat. And the fourth six took off my soiled garments, and placed others upon me, namely, an undervest and a doublet of fine linen, and a robe and a surcoat, and a mantle of yellow satin, with a broad gold band upon the mantle. And they placed cushions both beneath and around me, with coverings of red linen. And I sat down. Now the six maidens who had taken my horse unharnessed him as well as if they had been the best squires in the island of Britain.

"Then behold they brought bowls of silver, wherein was water to wash, and towels of linen, some green and some white; and I washed. And in a little while the

man sat down at the table. And I sat next to him, and below me sat all the maidens, except those who waited on us. And the table was of silver, and the cloths upon the table were of linen. And no vessel was served upon the table that was not either of gold or of silver or of buffalo-horn. And our meat was brought to us. And verily, Kay, I saw there every sort of meat and every sort of liquor that I ever saw elsewhere; but the meat and the liquor were better served there than I ever saw them in any other place.

"Until the repast was half over, neither the man nor any one of the damsels spoke a single word to me; but when the man perceived that it would be more agreeable for me to converse than to eat any more, he began to inquire of me who I was. Then I told the man who I was, and what was the cause of my journey, and said that I was seeking whether any one was superior to me, or whether I could gain the mastery over all. The man looked upon me, and he smiled and said, 'If I did not fear to do thee a mischief, I would show thee that which thou seekest.' Then I desired him to speak freely. And he said: 'Sleep here to-night, and in the morning arise early, and take the road upwards through the valley, until thou reachest the wood. A little way within the wood thou wilt come to a large sheltered glade, with a mound in the centre. And thou wilt see a black man of great stature on the top of the mound. He has but one foot, and one eye in the middle of his forehead. He is the wood-ward of that wood. And thou wilt see a thousand wild animals grazing around him. Inquire of him the way out of the glade, and he will reply to thee

briefly, and will point out the road by which thou shalt find that which thou art in quest of.'

"And long seemed that night to me. And the next morning I arose and equipped myself, and mounted my horse, and proceeded straight through the valley to the wood, and at length I arrived at the glade. And the black man was there, sitting upon the top of the mound; and I was three times more astonished at the number of wild animals that I beheld, than the man had said I should be. Then I inquired of him the way, and he asked me roughly whither I would go. And when I had told him who I was, and what I sought, 'Take,' said he, 'that path that leads toward the head of the glade, and there thou wilt find an open space like to a large valley, and in the midst of it a tall tree. Under this tree is a fountain, and by the side of the fountain a marble slab, and on the marble slab a silver bowl, attached by a chain of silver, that it may not be carried away. Take the bowl, and throw a bowlful of water on the slab. And if thou dost not find trouble in that adventure, thou needest not seek it during the rest of thy life.'

"So I journeyed on until I reached the summit of the steep. And there I found everything as the black man had described it to me. And I went up to the tree, and beneath it I saw the fountain, and by its side the marble slab, and the silver bowl fastened by the chain. Then I took the bowl, and cast a bowlful of water upon the slab. And immediately I heard a mighty peal of thunder, so that heaven and earth seemed to tremble with its fury. And after the thunder came a shower; and of a truth I tell thee, Kay, that it was such a shower

as neither man nor beast could endure and live. I turned my horse's flank toward the shower, and placed the beak of my shield over his head and neck, while I held the upper part of it over my own neck. And thus I withstood the shower. And presently the sky became clear, and with that, behold, the birds lighted upon the tree and sang. And truly, Kay, I never heard any melody equal to that, either before or since. And when I was most charmed with listening to the birds, lo! a chiding voice was heard of one approaching me, and saying, 'O knight, what has brought thee hither? What evil have I done to thee, that thou shouldst act towards me and my possessions as thou hast this day? Dost thou not know that the shower to-day has left in my dominions neither man nor beast alive that was exposed to it?' And thereupon, behold, a knight on a black horse appeared, clothed in jet-black velvet, and with a tabard of black linen about him. And we charged each other, and, as the onset was furious, it was not long before I was overthrown. Then the knight passed the shaft of his lance through the bridle-rein of my horse, and rode off with the two horses, leaving me where I was. And he did not even bestow so much notice upon me as to imprison me, nor did he despoil me of my arms. So I returned along the road by which I had come. And when I reached the glade where the black man was, I confess to thee, Kay, it is a marvel that I did not melt down into a liquid pool, through the shame I felt at the black man's derision. And that night I came to the same castle where I had spent the night preceding. And I was more agreeably enter-

tained that night than I had been the night before. And I conversed freely with the inmates of the castle; and none of them alluded to my expedition to the fountain, neither did I mention it to any. And I remained there that night. When I arose on the morrow I found ready saddled a dark bay palfrey, with nostrils as red as scarlet. And after putting on my armor, and leaving there my blessing, I returned to my own court. And that horse I still possess, and he is in the stable yonder. And I declare that I would not part with him for the best palfrey in the island of Britain.

"Now, of a truth, Kay, no man ever before confessed to an adventure so much to his own discredit; and verily it seems strange to me that neither before nor since have I heard of any person who knew of this adventure, and that the subject of it should exist within King Arthur's dominions without any other person lighting upon it."

"Now," quoth Owain, "would it not be well to go and endeavor to discover that place?"

"By the hand of my friend," said Kay, "often dost thou utter that with thy tongue which thou wouldest not make good with thy deeds."

"In very truth," said Guenever, "it were better thou wert hanged, Kay, than to use such uncourteous speech towards a man like Owain."

"By the hand of my friend, good lady," said Kay, "thy praise of Owain is not greater than mine."

With that Arthur awoke, and asked if he had not been sleeping a little.

"Yes, lord," answered Owain, "thou hast slept awhile."

"Is it time for us to go to meat?"

"It is, lord," said Owain.

Then the horn for washing was sounded, and the king and all his household sat down to eat. And when the meal was ended, Owain withdrew to his lodging, and made ready his horse and his arms.

On the morrow with the dawn of day he put on his armor, and mounted his charger, and traveled through distant lands, and over desert mountains. And at length he arrived at the valley which Kynon had described to him, and he was certain that it was the same that he sought. And journeying along the valley, by the side of the river, he followed its course till he came to the plain, and within sight of the castle. When he approached the castle, he saw the youths shooting with their bows, in the place where Kynon had seen them, and the yellow man, to whom the castle belonged, standing hard by. And no sooner had Owain saluted the yellow man, than he was saluted by him in return.

And he went forward towards the castle, and there he saw the chamber; and when he had entered the chamber, he beheld the maidens working at satin embroidery, in chains of gold. And their beauty and their comeliness seemed to Owain far greater than Kynon had represented to him. And they arose to wait upon Owain, as they had done to Kynon. And the meal which they set before him gave even more satisfaction to Owain than it had done to Kynon.

About the middle of the repast the yellow man asked Owain the object of his journey. And Owain made it

known to him, and said, "I am in quest of the knight who guards the fountain." Upon this the yellow man smiled, and said that he was as loath to point out that adventure to him as he had been to Kynon. However, he described the whole to Owain, and they retired to rest.

The next morning Owain found his horse made ready for him by the damsels, and he set forward and came to the glade where the black man was. And the stature of the black man seemed more wonderful to Owain than it had done to Kynon; and Owain asked of him his road, and he showed it to him. And Owain followed the road till he came to the green tree; and he beheld the fountain, and the slab beside the fountain, and the bowl upon it. And Owain took the bowl and threw a bowlful of water upon the slab. And, lo! the thunder was heard, and after the thunder came the shower, more violent than Kynon had described, and after the shower the sky became bright. And immediately the birds came and settled upon the tree and sang. And when their song was most pleasing to Owain, he beheld a knight coming towards him through the valley; and he prepared to receive him, and encountered him violently. Having broken both their lances, they drew their swords and fought blade to blade. Then Owain struck the knight a blow through his helmet, headpiece, and visor, and through the skin, and the flesh, and the bone, until it wounded the very brain. Then the black knight felt that he had received a mortal wound, upon which he turned his horse's head and fled. And Owain pursued him, and followed close upon him, although he was not near enough to strike him with his sword. Then Owain de-

scried a vast and resplendent castle; and they came to the castle gate. And the black knight was allowed to enter, and the portcullis was let fall upon Owain; and it struck his horse behind the saddle, and cut him in two, and carried away the rowels of the spurs that were upon Owain's heels. And the portcullis descended to the floor. And the rowels of the spurs and part of the horse were without, and Owain with the other part of the horse remained between the two gates, and the inner gate was closed, so that Owain could not go thence; and Owain was in a perplexing situation. And while he was in this state, he could see through an aperture in the gate a street facing him, with a row of houses on each side. And he beheld a maiden, with yellow, curling hair, and a frontlet of gold upon her head; and she was clad in a dress of yellow satin, and on her feet were shoes of variegated leather. And she approached the gate, and desired that it should be opened. "Heaven knows, lady," said Owain, "it is no more possible for me to open to thee from hence, than it is for thee to set me free." And he told her his name, and who he was. "Truly," said the damsel, "it is very sad that thou canst not be released; and every woman ought to succor thee, for I know there is no one more faithful in the service of ladies than thou. Therefore," quoth she, "whatever is in my power to do for thy release, I will do it. Take this ring, and put it on thy finger, with the stone inside thy hand, and close thy hand upon the stone. And as long as thou concealest it, it will conceal thee. When they come forth to fetch thee, they will be much grieved that they cannot find thee. And I will await thee on the

horse-block yonder, and thou wilt be able to see me, though I cannot see thee. Therefore come and place thy hand upon my shoulder, that I may know that thou art near me. And by the way that I go hence, do thou accompany me."

Then the maiden went away from Owain, and he did all that she had told him. And the people of the castle came to seek Owain to put him to death; and when they found nothing but the half of his horse, they were sorely grieved.

And Owain vanished from among them, and went to the maiden, and placed his hand upon her shoulder; whereupon she set off, and Owain followed her, until they came to the door of a large and beautiful chamber, and the maiden opened it, and they went in. And Owain looked around the chamber, and behold there was not a single nail in it that was not painted with gorgeous colors, and there was not a single panel that had not sundry images in gold portrayed upon it.

The maiden kindled a fire, and took water in a silver bowl, and gave Owain water to wash. Then she placed before him a silver table, inlaid with gold; upon which was a cloth of yellow linen, and she brought him food. And, of a truth, Owain never saw any kind of meat that was not there in abundance, but it was better cooked there than he had ever found it in any other place. And there was not one vessel from which he was served that was not of gold or of silver. And Owain ate and drank until late in the afternoon, when, lo! they heard a mighty clamor in the castle, and Owain asked the maiden what it was. "They are administering extreme unction," said

she, "to the nobleman who owns the castle." And she prepared a couch for Owain which was meet for Arthur himself, and Owain went to sleep.

And a little after daybreak he heard an exceeding loud clamor and wailing, and he asked the maiden what was the cause of it. "They are bearing to the church the body of the nobleman who owned the castle."

And Owain rose up, and clothed himself, and opened a window of the chamber, and looked towards the castle; and he could see neither the bounds nor the extent of the hosts that filled the streets. And they were fully armed; and a vast number of women were with them, both on horseback and on foot, and all the ecclesiastics in the city singing. In the midst of the throng he beheld the bier, over which was a veil of white linen; and wax tapers were burning beside and around it; and none that supported the bier was lower in rank than a powerful baron.

Never did Owain see an assemblage so gorgeous with silk and satin. And following the train, he beheld a lady with yellow hair falling over her shoulders, and stained with blood; and about her a dress of yellow satin, which was torn. Upon her feet were shoes of variegated leather. And it was a marvel that the ends of her fingers were not bruised from the violence with which she smote her hands together. Truly she would have been the fairest lady Owain ever saw had she been in her usual guise. And her cry was louder than the shout of the men or the clamor of the trumpets. No sooner had he beheld the lady than he became inflamed with her love, so that it took entire possession of him.

Then he inquired of the maiden who the lady was. "Heaven knows," replied the maiden, "she is the fairest, and the most chaste, and the most liberal, and the most noble of women. She is my mistress, and she is called the Countess of the Fountain, the wife of him whom thou didst slay yesterday." "Verily," said Owain, "she is the woman that I love best." "Verily," said the maiden, "she shall also love thee, not a little."

Then the maiden prepared a repast for Owain, and truly he thought he had never before so good a meal, nor was he ever so well served. Then she left him, and went towards the castle. When she came there she found nothing but mourning and sorrow; and the countess in her chamber could not bear the sight of any one through grief. Luned, for that was the name of the maiden, saluted her, but the countess answered her not. And the maiden bent down towards her, and said, "What aileth thee that thou answerest no one to-day?" "Luned," said the countess, "what change hath befallen thee that thou hast not come to visit me in my grief? It was wrong in thee, and I so sorely afflicted." "Truly," said Luned, "I thought thy good sense was greater than I find it to be. Is it well for thee to mourn after that good man, or for anything else that thou canst not have?" "I declare to Heaven," said the countess, "that in the whole world there is not a man equal to him." "Not so," said Luned, "for an ugly man would be as good as, or better than he." "I declare to Heaven," said the countess, "that were it not repugnant to me to put to death one whom I have brought up I would have thee executed for making such a comparison

to me. As it is, I will banish thee." "I am glad," said Luned, "that thou hast no other cause to do so than that I would have been of service to thee, where thou didst not know what was to thine advantage. Henceforth evil betide whichever of us shall make the first advance towards reconciliation to the other, whether I should seek an invitation from thee, or thou of thine own accord shouldst send to invite me."

With that Luned went forth; and the countess arose and followed her to the door of the chamber, and began coughing loudly. And when Luned looked back the countess beckoned to her, and she returned to the countess. "In truth," said the countess, "evil is thy disposition; but if thou knowest what is to my advantage, declare it to me." "I will do so," said she.

"Thou knowest that, except by warfare and arms, it is impossible for thee to preserve thy possessions; delay not, therefore, to seek some one who can defend them." "And how can I do that?" said the countess. "I will tell thee," said Luned; "unless thou canst defend the fountain, thou canst not maintain thy dominions; and no one can defend the fountain except it be a knight of Arthur's household. I will go to Arthur's court, and ill betide me if I return not thence with a warrior who can guard the fountain as well as, or even better, than he who defended it formerly." "That will be hard to perform," said the countess. "Go, however, and make proof of that which thou hast promised."

Luned set out under the pretense of going to Arthur's court; but she went back to the mansion where she had left Owain, and she tarried there as long as it might

have taken her to travel to the court of King Arthur and back. And at the end of that time she appareled herself, and went to visit the countess. And the countess was much rejoiced when she saw her, and inquired what news she brought from the court. "I bring thee the best of news," said Luned, "for I have compassed the object of my mission. When willt thou that I should present to thee the chieftain who has come with me thither?" "Bring him here to visit me to-morrow," said the countess, "and I will cause the town to be assembled by that time."

And Luned returned home. And the next day, at noon, Owain arrayed himself in a coat and a surcoat, and a mantle of yellow satin, upon which was a broad band of gold lace; and on his feet were high shoes of variegated leather, which were fastened by golden clasps, in the form of lions. And they proceeded to the chamber of the countess.

Right glad was the countess of their coming. And she gazed steadfastly upon Owain, and said, "Luned, this knight has not the look of a traveler." "What harm is there in that, lady?" said Luned. "I am certain," said the countess, "that no other man than this chased the soul from the body of my lord." "So much the better for thee, lady," said Luned; "for had he not been stronger than thy lord, he could not have deprived him of life. There is no remedy for that which is past, be it as it may." "Go back to thine abode," said the countess, "and I will take counsel."

The next day the countess caused all her subjects to assemble, and showed them that her earldom was left

defenseless, and that it could not be protected but with horse and arms, and military skill. "Therefore," said she, "this is what I offer for your choice: either let one of you take me, or give your consent for me to take a husband from elsewhere, to defend my dominions."

So they came to the determination that it was better that she should have permission to marry some one from elsewhere; and thereupon she sent for the bishops and archbishops, to celebrate her nuptials with Owain. And the men of the earldom did Owain homage.

And Owain defended the fountain with lance and sword. And this is the manner in which he defended it. Whensoever a knight came there, he overthrew him, and sold him for his full worth. And what he thus gained he divided among his barons and his knights, and no man in the whole world could be more beloved than he was by his subjects. And it was thus for the space of three years.

It befell that, as Gawain went forth one day with King Arthur, he perceived him to be very sad and sorrowful. And Gawain was much grieved to see Arthur in this state, and he questioned him, saying, "O my lord, what has befallen thee?" "In sooth, Gawain," said Arthur, "I am grieved concerning Owain, whom I have lost these three years; and I shall certainly die if the fourth year pass without my seeing him. Now I am sure that it is through the tale which Kynon, the son of Clydno, related, that I have lost Owain." "There is no need for thee," said Gawain, "to summon to arms thy whole dominions on this account, for thou thyself, and the men

of thy household, will be able to avenge Owain if he be slain, or to set him free if he be in prison; and, if alive, to bring him back with thee." And it was settled according to what Gawain had said.

Then Arthur and the men of his household prepared to go and seek Owain. And Kynon, the son of Clydno, acted as their guide. And Arthur came to the castle where Kynon had been before. And when he came there, the youths were shooting in the same place, and the yellow man was standing hard by. When the yellow man saw Arthur, he greeted him, and invited him to the castle. And Arthur accepted his invitation, and they entered the castle together. And great as was the number of his retinue, their presence was scarcely observed in the castle, so vast was its extent. And the maidens rose up to wait on them. And the service of the maidens appeared to them all to excel any attendance they had ever met with; and even the pages, who had charge of the horses, were no worse served that night than Arthur himself would have been in his own palace.

The next morning Arthur set out thence, with Kynon for his guide, and came to the place where the black man was. And the stature of the black man was more surprising to Arthur than it had been represented to him. And they came to the top of the wooded steep, and traversed the valley, till they reached the green tree, where they saw the fountain and the bowl and the slab. And upon that Kay came to Arthur, and spoke to him. "My lord," said he, "I know the meaning of all this, and my request is that thou wilt permit me to throw

the water on the slab, and to receive the first adventure that may befall." And Arthur gave him leave.

Then Kay threw a bowlful of water upon the slab, and immediately there came the thunder, and after the thunder the shower. And such a thunderstorm they had never known before. After the shower had ceased, the sky became clear, and on looking at the tree, they beheld it completely leafless. Then the birds descended upon the tree. And the song of the birds was far sweeter than any strain they had ever heard before. Then they beheld a knight, on a coal-black horse, clothed in black satin, coming rapidly towards them. And Kay met him and encountered him, and it was not long before Kay was overthrown. And the knight withdrew. And Arthur and his host encamped for the night.

And when they arose in the morning, they perceived the signal of combat upon the lance of the knight. Then, one by one, all the household of Arthur went forth to combat the knight, until there was not one that was not overthrown by him, except Arthur and Gawain. And Arthur armed himself to encounter the knight. "O my lord," said Gawain, "permit me to fight with him first." And Arthur permitted him. And he went forth to meet the knight, having over himself and his horse a satin robe of honor, which had been sent him by the daughter of the Earl of Rhangyr, and in this dress he was not known by any of the host. And they charged each other, and fought all that day until the evening. And neither of them was able to unhorse the other. And so it was the next day; they broke their lances in the shock, but neither of them could obtain the mastery.

KING ARTHUR

And the third day they fought with exceeding strong lances. And they were incensed with rage, and fought furiously, even until noon. And they gave each other such a shock, that the girths of their horses were broken, so that they fell over their horses' cruppers to the ground. And they rose up speedily and drew their swords, and resumed the combat. And all they that witnessed their encounter felt assured that they had never before seen two men so valiant or so powerful. And had it been midnight, it would have been light, from the fire that flashed from their weapons. And the knight gave Gawain a blow that turned his helmet from off his face, so that the knight saw that it was Gawain. Then Owain said, "My lord Gawain, I did not know thee for my cousin, owing to the robe of honor that enveloped thee; take my sword and my arms." Said Gawain, "Thou, Owain, art the victor; take thou my sword." And with that Arthur saw that they were conversing, and advanced toward them. "My lord Arthur," said Gawain, "here is Owain, who has vanquished me, and will not take my arms." "My lord," said Owain, "it is he that has vanquished me, and he will not take my sword." "Give me your swords," said Arthur, "and then neither of you has vanquished the other." Then Owain put his arms round Arthur's neck, and they embraced. And all the host hurried forward, to see Owain, and to embrace him. And there was nigh being a loss of life, so great was the press.

And they retired that night, and the next day Arthur prepared to depart. "My lord," said Owain, "this is not well of thee. For I have been absent from thee these

three years; and during all that time, up to this very day, I have been preparing a banquet for thee, knowing that thou wouldst come to seek me. Tarry with me, therefore, until thou and thy attendants have recovered the fatigues of the journey, and have been anointed."

And they all proceeded to the castle of the Countess of the Fountain, and the banquet which had been three years preparing was consumed in three months. Never had they a more delicious or agreeable banquet. And Arthur prepared to depart. Then he sent an embassy to the countess to beseech her to permit Owain to go with him for the space of three months, that he might show him to the nobles and the fair dames of the island of Britain. And the countess gave her consent, although it was very painful to her. So Owain came with Arthur to the island of Britain. And when he was once more amongst his kindred and friends, he remained three years, instead of three months, with them.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE LION

And as Owain one day sat at meat, in the city of Caerleon upon Usk, behold a damsel entered the hall, upon a bay horse, with a curling mane, and covered with foam; and the bridle, and as much as was seen of the saddle, were of gold. And the damsel was arrayed in a dress of yellow satin. And she came up to Owain, and took the ring from off his hand. "Thus," said she, "shall be treated the deceiver, the traitor, the faithless, the disgraced, and the beardless." And she turned her horse's head, and departed.

Then his adventure came to Owain's remembrance, and he was sorrowful. And having finished eating, he went to his own abode, and made preparations that night. And the next day he arose, but did not go to the court, nor did he return to the Countess of the Fountain, but wandered to the distant parts of the earth and to uncultivated mountains. And he remained there until all his apparel was worn out and his body was wasted away, and his hair was grown long. And he went about with the wild beasts, and fed with them, until they became familiar with him. But at length he became so weak that he could no longer bear them company. Then he descended from the mountains to the valley, and came to a park, that was the fairest in the world, and belonged to a charitable lady.

One day the lady and her attendants went forth to walk by a lake that was in the middle of the park. And they saw the form of a man lying as if dead. And they were terrified. Nevertheless they went near him, and touched him, and they saw that there was life in him. And the lady returned to the castle, and took a flask full of precious ointment and gave it to one of her maidens. "Go with this," said she, "and take with thee yonder horse, and clothing, and place them near the man we saw just now; and anoint him with this balsam near his heart; and if there is life in him he will revive, through the efficiency of this balsam. Then watch what he will do."

And the maiden departed from her, and went and poured of the balsam upon Owain, and left the horse and the garments hard by, and went a little way off and

hid herself to watch him. In a short time she saw him begin to move; and he rose up and looked at his person, and became ashamed of the unseemliness of his appearance. Then he perceived the horse and the garments that were near him. And he clothed himself, and with difficulty mounted the horse. Then the damsel discovered herself to him, and saluted him. And he and the maiden proceeded to the castle, and the maiden conducted him to a pleasant chamber, and kindled a fire, and left him.

And he stayed at the castle three months, till he was restored to his former guise, and became even more comely than he had ever been before. And Owain rendered signal service to the lady in a controversy with a powerful neighbor, so that he made ample requital to her for her hospitality; and he took his departure.

And as he journeyed he heard a loud yelling in a wood. And it was repeated a second and a third time. And Owain went towards the spot, and beheld a huge craggy mound, in the middle of the wood, on the side of which was a gray rock. And there was a cleft in the rock, and a serpent was within the cleft. And near the rock stood a black lion, and every time the lion sought to go thence the serpent darted towards him to attack him. And Owain unsheathed his sword, and drew near to the rock; and as the serpent sprung out he struck him with his sword and cut him in two. And he dried his sword, and went on his way as before. But behold the lion followed him, and played about him, as though it had been a greyhound that he had reared.

They proceeded thus throughout the day, until the

evening. And when it was time for Owain to take his rest he dismounted, and turned his horse loose in a flat and wooded meadow. And he struck fire, and when the fire was kindled the lion brought him fuel enough to last for three nights. And the lion disappeared. And presently the lion returned, bearing a fine large roebuck. And he threw it down before Owain, who went towards the fire with it.

And Owain took the roebuck and skinned it, and placed collops of its flesh upon skewers round the fire. The rest of the buck he gave to the lion to devour. While he was so employed he heard a deep groan near him, and a second, and a third. And the place whence the groans proceeded was a cave in the rock; and Owain went near, and called out to know who it was that groaned so piteously. And a voice answered, "I am Luned, the handmaiden of the Countess of the Fountain." "And what dost thou here?" said he. "I am imprisoned," said she, "on account of the knight who came from Arthur's court and married the countess. And he staid a short time with her, but he afterwards departed for the court of Arthur, and has not returned since. And two of the countess's pages traduced him, and called him a deceiver. And because I said I would vouch for it he would come before long and maintain his cause against both of them, they imprisoned me in this cave, and said that I should be put to death unless he came to deliver me by a certain day; and that is no further off than to-morrow, and I have no one to send to seek him for me. His name is Owain, the son of Urien." "And art thou certain that if that knight

knew all this he would come to thy rescue?" "I am most certain of it," said she.

When the collops were cooked, Owain divided them into two parts, between himself and the maiden, and then Owain laid himself down to sleep; and never did sentinel keep stricter watch over his lord than the lion that night over Owain.

And the next day there came two pages with a great troop of attendants to take Luned from her cell, and put her to death. And Owain asked them what charge they had against her. And they told him of the compact that was between them; as the maiden had done the night before. "And," said they, "Owain has failed her, therefore we are taking her to be burnt." "Truly," said Owain, "he is a good knight, and if he knew that the maiden was in such peril, I marvel that he came not to her rescue. But if you will accept me in his stead, I will do battle with you." "We will," said the youths.

And they attacked Owain, and he was hard beset by them. And with that, the lion came to Owain's assistance, and they two got the better of the young men. And they said to him, "Chieftain, it was not agreed that we should fight save with thyself alone, and it is harder for us to contend with yonder animal than with thee." And Owain put the lion in the place where Luned had been imprisoned, and blocked up the door with stones. And he went to fight with the young men as before. But Owain had not his usual strength, and the two youths pressed hard upon him. And the lion roared incessantly at seeing Owain in trouble. And he burst through the wall, until he found his way out, and rushed

upon the young men and instantly slew them. So Luned was saved from being burned.

Then Owain returned with Luned to the castle of the Lady of the Fountain. And when he went thence, he took the countess with him to Arthur's court, and she was his wife as long as she lived.

PWYLL AND THE GAME OF BADGER IN THE BAG

By Thomas Bulfinch

ONCE upon a time Pwyll was at Narberth, his chief palace, where a feast had been prepared for him, and with him was a great host of men. And after the first meal Pwyll arose to walk; and he went to the top of a mound that was above the palace, and was called Gorsedd Arberth. "Lord," said one of the court, "it is peculiar to the mound that whosoever sits upon it cannot go thence without either receiving wounds or blows, or else seeing a wonder." "I fear not to receive wounds or blows," said Pwyll; "but as to the wonder, gladly would I see it. I will therefore go and sit upon the mound."

And upon the mound he sat. And while he sat there, they saw a lady, on a pure white horse of large size, with a garment of shining gold around her, coming along the highway that led from the mound. "My men," said Pwyll, "is there any among you who knows yonder lady?" "There is not, lord," said they. "Go one of you and meet her, that we may know who she is." And one of them arose, and as he came upon the road to meet her, she passed by; and he followed as fast as he could, being on foot, and the greater was his speed, the farther was she from him. And when he saw that it

profited him nothing to follow her, he returned to Pwyll, and said unto him, "Lord, it is idle for any one in the world to follow her on foot." "Verily," said Pwyll, "go unto the palace, and take the fleetest horse that thou seest, and go after her."

And he took a horse and went forward. And he came to an open, level plain, and put spurs to his horse; and the more he urged his horse, the farther was she from him. And he returned to the palace where Pwyll was, and said, "Lord, it will avail nothing for any one to follow yonder lady. I know of no horse in these realms swifter than this, and it availed me not to pursue her." "Of a truth," said Pwyll, "there must be some illusion here; let us go towards the palace." So to the palace they went, and spent the day.

And the next day they amused themselves until it was time to go to meat. And when meat was ended, Pwyll said, "Where are the hosts that went yesterday to the top of the mound?" "Behold, lord, we are here," said they. "Let us go," said he, "to the mound, and sit there. And do thou," said he to the page who tended his horse, "saddle my horse well, and hasten with him to the road, and bring also my spurs with thee." And the youth did thus. And they went and sat upon the mound; and ere they had been there but a short time, they beheld the lady coming by the same road, and in the same manner, and at the same pace. "Young man," said Pwyll, "I see the lady coming; give me my horse." And before he had mounted his horse she passed him. And he turned after her and followed her. And he let his horse go bounding playfully, and thought

that he should soon come up with her. But he came no nearer to her than at first. Then he urged his horse to his utmost speed, yet he found that it availed not. Then said Pwyll, "O maiden, for the sake of him whom thou best lovest, stay for me." "I will stay gladly," said she; "and it were better for thy horse hadst thou asked it long since." So the maiden stopped; and she threw back that part of her headdress which covered her face. Then he thought that the beauty of all the maidens and all the ladies that he had ever seen was as nothing compared to her beauty. "Lady," he said, "wilt thou tell me aught concerning thy purpose?" "I will tell thee," said she; "my chief quest was to see thee." "Truly," said Pwyll, "this is to me the most pleasing quest on which thou couldst have come; and wilt thou tell me who thou art?" "I will tell thee, lord," said she. "I am Rhiannon, the daughter of Heveydd, and they sought to give me to a husband against my will. But no husband would I have, and that because of my love for thee; neither will I yet have one, unless thou reject me; and hither have I come to hear thy answer." "By Heaven," said Pwyll, "behold this is my answer. If I might choose among all the ladies and damsels in the world, thee would I choose." "Verily," said she, "if thou art thus minded, make a pledge to meet me ere I am given to another." "The sooner I may do so, the more pleasing will it be to me," said Pwyll; "and wheresoever thou wilt, there will I meet with thee." "I will that thou meet me this day twelvemonth at the palace of Heveydd." "Gladly," said he, "will I keep this tryst." So they parted, and he went

back to his hosts, and to them of his household. And whatsoever questions they asked him respecting the damsel, he always turned the discourse upon other matters.

And when a year from that time was gone, he caused a hundred knights to equip themselves, and to go with him to the palace of Heveydd. And he came to the palace, and there was great joy concerning him, with much concourse of people, and great rejoicing, and vast preparations for his coming. And the whole court was placed under his orders.

And the hall was garnished, and they went to meat, and thus did they sit: Heveydd was on one side of Pwyll, and Rhiannon on the other; and all the rest according to their rank. And they ate and feasted, and talked one with another. And at the beginning of the carousal after the meat, there entered a tall, auburn-haired youth, of royal bearing, clothed in a garment of satin. And when he came into the hall, he saluted Pwyll and his companions. "The greeting of Heaven be unto thee," said Pwyll; "come thou and sit down." "Nay," said he, "a suitor am I, and I will do my errand." "Do so, willingly," said Pwyll. "Lord," said he, "my errand is unto thee, and it is to crave a boon of thee that I come." "What boon soever thou mayest ask of me, so far as I am able, thou shalt have." "Ah!" said Rhiannon, "wherefore didst thou give that answer?" "Has he not given it before the presence of these nobles?" asked the youth. "My soul," said Pwyll, "what is the boon thou askest?" "The lady whom best I love is to be thy bride this night; I come to ask

her of thee, with the feast and the banquet that are in this place." And Pwyll was silent, because of the promise which he had given. "Be silent as long as thou wilt," said Rhiannon; "never did man make worse use of his wits than thou hast done." "Lady," said he, "I knew not who he was." "Behold, this is the man to whom they would have given me against my will," said she; "and he is Gawl, the son of Clud, a man of great power and wealth, and because of the word thou hast spoken, bestow me upon him, lest shame befall thee." "Lady," said he, "I understand not thy answer; never can I do as thou sayest." "Bestow me upon him," said she, "and I will cause that I shall never be his." "By what means will that be?" asked Pwyll. Then she told him the thought that was in her mind. And they talked long together. Then Gawl said, "Lord, it is meet that I have an answer to my request." "As much of that thou hast asked as it is in my power to give, thou shalt have," replied Pwyll. "My soul," said Rhiannon unto Gawl, "as for the feast and the banquet that are here, I have bestowed them upon the men of Dyved, and the household and the warriors that are with us. These can I not suffer to be given to any. In a year from to-night, a banquet shall be prepared for thee in this palace, that I may become thy bride."

So Gawl went forth to his possessions, and Pwyll went also back to Dyved. And they both spent that year until it was the time for the feast at the palace of Heveydd. Then Gawl, the son of Clud, set out to the feast that was prepared for him; and he came to the palace, and was received there with rejoicing. Pwyll,

also, the chief of Dyved, came to the orchard with a hundred knights, as Rhiannon had commanded him. And Pwyll was clad in coarse and ragged garments, and wore large, clumsy old shoes upon his feet. And when he knew that the carousal after the meat had begun, he went toward the hall; and when he came into the hall he saluted Gawl, the son of Clud, and his company, both men and women. "Heaven prosper thee," said Gawl, "and friendly greeting be unto thee!" "Lord," said he, "may Heaven reward thee! I have an errand unto thee." "Welcome be thine errand, and if thou ask of me that which is right, thou shalt have it gladly." "It is fitting," answered he; "I crave but from want, and the boon I ask is to have this small bag that thou seest filled with meat." "A request within reason is this," said he, "and gladly shalt thou have it. Bring him food." A great number of attendants arose and began to fill the bag; but for all they put into it, it was no fuller than at first. "My soul," said Gawl, "will thy bag ever be full?" "It will not, I declare to Heaven," said he, "for all that may be put into it, unless one possessed of lands, and domains, and treasure, shall arise and tread down with both his feet the food that is within the bag, and shall say, 'Enough has been put therein.'" Then said Rhiannon unto Gawl, the son of Clud, "Rise up quickly." "I will willingly arise," said he. So he rose up, and put his two feet into the bag. And Pwyll turned up the sides of the bag, so that Gawl was over his head in it. And he shut it up quickly, and slipped a knot upon the thongs, and blew his horn. And thereupon, behold, his knights came down upon the palace. And they seized

all the host that had come with Gawl, and cast them into his own prison. And Pwyll threw off his rags, and his old shoes, and his tattered array. And as they came in every one of Pwyll's knights struck a blow upon the bag, and asked, "What is here?" "A badger," said they. And in this manner they played, each of them striking the bag, either with his foot or with a staff. And thus played they with the bag. And then was the game of Badger in the Bag first played.

"Lord," said the man in the bag, "if thou wouldst but hear me, I merit not to be slain in a bag." Said Heveydd, "Lord, he speaks truth; it were fitting that thou listen to him, for he deserves not this." "Verily," said Pwyll, "I will do thy counsel concerning him." "Behold, this is my counsel then," said Rhiannon. "Thou art now in a position in which it behooves thee to satisfy suitors and minstrels. Let him give unto them in thy stead, and take a pledge from him that he will never seek to revenge that which has been done to him. And this will be punishment enough." "I will do this gladly," said the man in the bag. "And gladly will I accept it," said Pwyll, "since it is the counsel of Heveydd and Rhiannon. Seek thyself sureties." "We will be for him," said Heveydd, "until his men be free to answer for him." And upon this he was let out of the bag, and his liegemen were liberated. "Verily, lord," said Gawl, "I am greatly hurt, and I have many bruises. With thy leave I will go forth. I will leave nobles in my stead to answer for me in all that thou shalt require." "Willingly," said Pwyll, "mayest thou do thus." So Gawl went to his own possessions.

And the hall was set in order for Pwyll and the men of his host, and for them also of the palace, and they went to the tables and sat down. And as they had sat at that time twelve-month, so sat they that night. And they ate and feasted, and spent the night in mirth and tranquillity. And the time came that they should sleep and Pwyll and Rhiannon went to their chamber.

And next morning at break of day, "My lord," said Rhiannon, "arise and begin to give thy gifts unto the minstrels. Refuse no one to-day that may claim thy bounty." "Thus shall it be gladly," said Pwyll, "both to-day and every day while the feast shall last." So Pwyll arose, and he caused silence to be proclaimed, and desired all the suitors and minstrels to show and to point out what gifts they desired. And this being done, the feast went on, and he denied no one while it lasted. And when the feast was ended, Pwyll said unto Heveydd, "My lord, with thy permission I will set out for Dyved to-morrow." "Certainly," said Heveydd; "may Heaven prosper thee! Fix also a time when Rhiannon shall follow thee." "By Heaven," said Pwyll, "we will go hence together." "Willest thou this, lord?" said Heveydd. "Yes, lord," answered Pwyll.

And the next day they set forward towards Dyved, and journeyed to the palace of Narberth, where a feast was made ready for them. And there came to them great numbers of the chief men and the most noble ladies of the land, and of these there were none to whom Rhiannon did not give some rich gift, either a bracelet, or a ring, or a precious stone. And they ruled the land prosperously that year and the next.

MANAWYDDAN AND THE SEVEN ENCHANTED CANTREVS

By Thomas Bulfinch

PWYLL and Rhiannon had a son, whom they named Pryderi. And when he was grown up, Pwyll, his father, died. And Pryderi married Kicva, the daughter of Gwynn Gloy.

Now Manawyddan returned from the war in Ireland, and he found that his cousin had seized all his possessions, and much grief and heaviness came upon him. "Alas! woe is me!" he exclaimed; "there is none save myself without a home and a resting-place." "Lord," said Pryderi, "be not so sorrowful. Thy cousin is king of the Island of the Mighty, and though he has done thee wrong, thou hast never been a claimant of land or possessions." "Yea," answered he, "but although this man is my cousin, it grieveth me to see any one in the place of my brother Bendigeid Vran; neither can I be happy in the same dwelling with him." "Wilt thou follow the counsel of another?" said Pryderi. "I stand in need of counsel," he answered, "and what may that counsel be?" "Seven cantrevs belong unto me," said Pryderi, "wherein Rhiannon, my mother, dwells. I will bestow her upon thee, and the seven cantrevs with her; and though thou hadst no possessions but those cantrevs only, thou couldst not have any fairer than they.

Do thou and Rhiannon enjoy them; and if thou desire any possessions thou wilt not despise these." "I do not, chieftain," said he. "Heaven reward thee for thy friendship! I will go with thee to seek Rhiannon, and to look at thy possessions." "Thou wilt do well," he answered; "and I believe thou didst never hear a lady discourse better than she, and when she was in her prime, none was ever fairer. Even now her aspect is not uncomely."

They set forth, and, however long the journey, they came at last to Dyved; and a feast was prepared for them by Rhiannon and Kicva. Then began Manawyddan and Rhiannon to sit and to talk together; and his mind and his thoughts became warmed towards her, and he thought in his heart he had never beheld any lady more fulfilled of grace and beauty than she. "Pryderi," said he, "I will that it be as thou didst say." "What saying was that?" asked Rhiannon. "Lady," said Pryderi, "I did offer thee as a wife to Manawyddan, the son of Llyr." "By that will I gladly abide," said Rhiannon. "Right glad am I also," said Manawyddan; "may Heaven reward him who hath shown unto me friendship so perfect as this."

And before the feast was over she became his bride. Said Pryderi, "Tarry ye here the rest of the feast, and I will go into England to tender my homage unto Caswallawn, the son of Beli." "Lord," said Rhiannon, "Caswallawn is in Kent; thou mayest therefore tarry at the feast, and wait until he shall be nearer." "We will wait," he answered. So they finished the feast. And they began to make the circuit of Dyved, and to hunt, and to take their pleasure. And as they went through

the country, they had never seen lands more pleasant to live in, nor better hunting-grounds, nor greater plenty of honey and fish. And such was the friendship between these four, that they would not be parted from each other by night nor by day.

And in the midst of all this he went to Caswallawn at Oxford, and tendered his homage; and honorable was his reception there, and highly was he praised for offering his homage.

And after his return Pryderi and Manawyddan feasted and took their ease and pleasure. And they began a feast at Narberth, for it was the chief palace. And when they had ended the first meal, while those who served them ate, they arose and went forth, and proceeded to the Gorsedd, that is, the Mound of Narberth, and their retinue with them. And as they sat thus, behold a peal of thunder, and with the violence of the thunder-storm, lo! there came a fall of mist, so thick that not one of them could see the other. And after the mist it became light all around. And when they looked towards the place where they were wont to see cattle and herds and dwellings, they saw nothing now, neither house, nor beast, nor smoke, nor fire, nor man, nor dwelling, but the buildings of the court empty, and desert, and uninhabited, without either man or beast within them. And truly all their companions were lost to them, without their knowing aught of what had befallen them, save those four only.

"In the name of Heaven," said Manawyddan, "where are they of the court, and all my host beside? Let us go and see."

So they came to the castle, and saw no man; and into the hall, and to the sleeping-place, and there was none; and in the mead-cellar and in the kitchen there was naught but desolation. Then they began to go through the land, and all the possessions that they had; and they visited the houses and dwellings, and found nothing but wild beasts. And when they had consumed their feast and all their provisions, they fed upon the prey they killed in hunting, and the honey of the wild swarms.

And one morning Pryderi and Manawyddan rose up to hunt, and they ranged their dogs and went forth. And some of the dogs ran before them, and came to a bush which was near at hand; but as soon as they were come to the bush, they hastily drew back, and returned to the men, their hair bristling up greatly. "Let us go near to the bush," said Pryderi, "and see what is in it." And as they came near, behold, a wild boar of a pure white color rose up from the bush. Then the dogs, being set on by the men, rushed towards him; but he left the bush, and fell back a little way from the men, and made a stand against the dogs, without retreating from them, until the men had come near. And when the men came up, he fell back a second time, and betook him to flight. Then they pursued the boar until they beheld a vast and lofty castle, all newly built, in a place where they had never before seen either stone or building. And the boar ran swiftly into the castle, and the dogs after him. Now when the boar and the dogs had gone into the castle, the men began to wonder at finding a castle in a place where they had never seen any building whatsoever. And from the top of the Gorsedd

they looked and listened for the dogs. But so long as they were there, they heard not one of the dogs, nor aught concerning them.

"Lord," said Pryderi, "I will go into the castle to get tidings of the dogs." "Truly," he replied, "thou wouldst be unwise to go into this castle, which thou hast never seen till now. If thou wouldst follow my counsel, thou wouldst not enter therein. Whosoever has cast a spell over this land, has caused this castle to be here." "Of a truth," answered Pryderi, "I cannot thus give up my dogs." And for all the counsel that Manawyddan gave him, yet to the castle he went.

When he came within the castle neither man, nor beast, nor boar, nor dogs, nor house, nor dwelling, saw he within it. But in the centre of the castle floor he beheld a fountain with marble-work around it, and on the margin of the fountain a golden bowl upon a marble slab, and chains hanging from the air, to which he saw no end.

And he was greatly pleased with the beauty of the gold, and with the rich workmanship of the bowl; and he went up to the bowl, and laid hold of it. And when he had taken hold of it his hands stuck to the bowl, and his feet to the slab on which the bowl was placed; and all his joyousness forsook him, so that he could not utter a word. And thus he stood.

And Manawyddan waited for him till near the close of the day. And late in the evening, being certain that he should have no tidings of Pryderi or the dogs, he went back to the palace. And as he entered Rhiannon looked at him. "Where," said she, "are thy com-

panion and thy dogs?" "Behold," he answered, "the adventure that has befallen me." And he related it all unto her. "An evil companion hast thou been," said Rhiannon, "and a good companion hast thou lost." And with that word she went out, and proceeded towards the castle, according to the direction which he gave her. The gate of the castle she found open. She was nothing daunted, and she went in. And as she went in she perceived Pryderi laying hold of the bowl, and she went towards him. "O my lord," said she, "what dost thou here?" And she took hold of the bowl with him; and as she did so her hands also became fast to the bowl, and her feet to the slab, and she was not able to utter a word. And with that, as it became night, lo! there came thunder upon them, and a fall of mist; and thereupon the castle vanished, and they with it.

When Kicva, the daughter of Glynn Gloy, saw that there was no one in the palace but herself and Manawyddan, she sorrowed so that she cared not whether she lived or died. And Manawyddan saw this. "Thou art in the wrong," said he, "if through fear of me thou grievest thus. I call Heaven to witness that thou hast never seen friendship more pure than that which I will bear thee, as long as Heaven will that thou shouldst be thus. I declare to thee that, were I in the dawn of youth, I would keep my faith unto Pryderi, and unto thee also will I keep it. Be there no fear upon thee, therefore." "Heaven reward thee!" she said; "and that is what I deemed of thee." And the damsel thereupon took courage, and was glad.

"Truly, lady," said Manawyddan, "it is not fitting

for us to stay here; we have lost our dogs, and cannot get food. Let us go into England; it is easier for us to find support there." "Gladly, lord," said she, "we will do so." And they set forth together to England.

"Lord," said she, "what craft wilt thou follow? Take up one that is seemly." "None other will I take," answered he, "but that of making shoes." "Lord," said she, "such a craft becomes not a man so nobly born as thou." "By that, however, will I abide," said he. "I know nothing thereof," said Kicva. "But I know," answered Manawyddan, "and I will teach thee to stitch. We will not attempt to dress the leather, but we will buy it ready dressed, and will make the shoes from it."

So they went into England, and went as far as Hereford; and they betook themselves to making shoes. And he began by buying the best cordwain that could be had in town, and none other would he buy. And he associated himself with the best goldsmith in the town, and caused him to make clasps for the shoes, and to gild the clasps; and he marked how it was done until he learned the method. And therefore is he called one of the three makers of gold shoes. And when they could be had from him, not a shoe nor hose was bought from any of the cordwainers in the town. But when the cordwainers perceived that their gains were failing (for as Manawyddan shaped the work so Kicva stitched it), they came together and took counsel, and agreed that they would slay them. And he had warning thereof, and it was told him how the cordwainers had agreed to slay him.

"Lord," said Kicva, "wherefore should this be borne from these boors?" "Nay," said he, "we will go back unto Dyved." So towards Dyved they set forth.

Now Manawyddan, when he set out to return to Dyved, took with him a burden of wheat. And he proceeded towards Narberth, and there he dwelt. And never was he better pleased than when he saw Narberth again, and the lands where he had been wont to hunt with Pryderi and with Rhiannon. And he accustomed himself to fish and to hunt the deer in their covert. And then he began to prepare some ground, and he sowed a croft, and a second, and a third. And no wheat in the world ever sprung up better. And the three crofts prospered with perfect growth, and no man ever saw fairer wheat than it.

And thus passed the seasons of the year until the harvest came. And he went to look at one of his crofts, and, behold, it was ripe. "I will reap this to-morrow," said he. And that night he went back to Narberth, and on the morrow, in the gray dawn, he went to reap the croft; and when he came there he found nothing but the bare straw. Every one of the ears of the wheat was cut off from the stalk, and all the ears carried entirely away, and nothing but the straw left. And at this he marveled greatly.

Then he went to look at another croft, and, behold, that also was ripe. "Verily," said he, "this will I reap to-morrow." And on the morrow he came with the intent to reap it; and when he came there he found nothing but the bare straw. "O gracious Heaven!" he exclaimed, "I know that whosoever has begun my

ruin is completing it, and has also destroyed the country with me."

Then he went to look at the third croft; and when he came there, finer wheat had there never been seen, and this also was ripe. "Evil betide me," said he, "if I watch not here to-night. Whoever carried off the other corn will come in like manner to take this, and I will know who it is." And he told Kicva all that had befallen. "Verily," said she, "what thinkest thou to do?" "I will watch the croft to-night," said he. And he went to watch the croft.

And at midnight he heard something stirring among the wheat; and he looked, and behold, the mightiest host of mice in the world, which could neither be numbered nor measured. And he knew not what it was until the mice had made their way into the croft, and each of them climbing up the straw, and bending it down with its weight, had cut off one of the ears of wheat, and had carried it away, leaving there the stalk; and he saw not a single straw there that had not a mouse to it. And they all took their way, carrying the ears with them.

In wrath and anger did he rush upon the mice; but he could no more come up with them than if they had been gnats or birds of the air, except one only, which, though it was but sluggish, went so fast that a man on foot could scarce overtake it. And after this one he went, and he caught it, and put it in his glove, and tied up the opening of the glove with a string, and kept it with him, and returned to the palace. Then he came to the hall where Kicva was, and he lighted a fire, and hung the glove by the string upon a peg. "What hast thou there, lord?"

said Kicva. "A thief," said he, "that I found robbing me." "What kind of thief may it be, lord, that thou couldst put into thy glove?" said she. Then he told her how the mice came to the last of the fields in his sight. "And one of them was less nimble than the rest, and is now in my glove; to-morrow I will hang it." "My lord," said she, "this is marvelous; but yet it would be unseemly for a man of dignity like thee to be hanging such a reptile as this." "Woe betide me," said he, "if I would not hang them all, could I catch them, and such as I have I will hang." "Verily, lord," said she, "there is no reason that I should succor this reptile, except to prevent discredit unto thee. Do therefore, lord, as thou wilt."

Then he went to the Mound of Narberth, taking the mouse with him. And he set up two forks on the highest part of the mound. And while he was doing this, behold, he saw a scholar coming towards him, in old and poor and tattered garments. And it was now seven years since he had seen in that place either man or beast except those four persons who had remained together until two of them were lost.

"My lord," said the scholar, "good-day to thee." "Heaven prosper thee, and my greeting be unto thee! And whence dost thou come, scholar?" asked he. "I come, lord, from singing in England; and wherefore dost thou inquire?" "Because for the last seven years," answered he, "I have seen no man here save four secluded persons, and thyself this moment." "Truly, lord," said he, "I go through this land unto mine own. And what work art thou upon, lord?" "I am hanging a thief that I caught robbing me," said he. "What manner of thief

is that?" asked the scholar. "I see a creature in thy hand like unto a mouse, and ill does it become a man of rank equal to thine to touch a reptile such as this. Let it go forth free." "I will not let it go free, by Heaven," said he; "I caught it robbing me, and the doom of a thief will I inflict upon it, and I will hang it." "Lord," said he, "rather than see a man of rank equal to thine at such a work as this, I would give thee a pound, which I have received as alms, to let the reptile go forth free." "I will not let it go free," said he, "neither will I sell it." "As thou wilt, lord," he answered; "I care naught." And the scholar went his way.

And as he was placing the cross-beam upon the two forks, behold, a priest came towards him, upon a horse covered with trappings. "Good-day to thee, lord," said he. "Heaven prosper thee!" said Manawyddan; "thy blessing." "The blessing of Heaven be upon thee: And what, lord, art thou doing?" "I am hanging a thief that I caught robbing me," said he. "What manner of thief, lord?" asked he. "A creature," he answered, "in form of a mouse. It has been robbing me, and I am inflicting upon it the doom of a thief." "Lord," said he, "rather than see thee touch this reptile, I would purchase its freedom." "By my confession to Heaven, neither will I sell it nor set it free." "It is true, lord, that it is worth nothing to buy; but rather than see thee defile thyself by touching such a reptile as this, I will give thee three pounds to let it go." "I will not, by Heaven," said he, "take any price for it. As it ought, so shall it be hanged." And the priest went his way.

Then he noosed the string around the mouse's neck,

and as he was about to draw it up, behold, he saw a bishop's retinue, with his sumpter-horses and his attendants. And the bishop himself came towards him. And he stayed his work. "Lord Bishop," said he, "thy blessing." "Heaven's blessing be unto thee!" said he. "What work art thou upon?" "Hanging a thief that I caught robbing me," said he. "Is not that a mouse that I see in thy hand?" "Yes," answered he, "and she has robbed me." "Ah," said he, "since I have come at the doom of this reptile, I will ransom it of thee. I will give thee seven pounds for it, and that rather than see a man of rank equal to thine destroying so vile a reptile as this. Let it loose, and thou shalt have the money." "I declare to Heaven that I will not let it loose." "If thou wilt not loose it for this, I will give thee four and twenty pounds of ready money to set it free." "I will not set it free, by Heaven, for as much again," said he. "If thou wilt not set it free for this, I will give thee all the horses that thou seest in this plain, and the seven loads of baggage, and the seven horses that they are upon." "By Heaven, I will not," he replied. "Since for this thou wilt not set it free, do so at what price soever thou wilt." "I will that Rhiannon and Pryderi be free," said he. "That thou shalt have," he answered. "Not yet will I loose the mouse, by Heaven." "What then wouldst thou?" "That the charm and the illusion be removed from the seven cantrevs of Dyved." "This shalt thou have also; set therefore the mouse free." "I will not set it free, by Heaven," said he, "till I know who the mouse may be." "She is my wife." "Wherefore came she to me?" "To despoil thee," he

answered. "I am Lloyd, the son of Kilwed, and I cast the charm over the seven cantrevs of Dyved. And it was to avenge Gawl, the son of Clud, from the friendship that I had towards him, that I cast the charm. And upon Pryderi did I avenge Gawl, the son of Clud, for the game of Badger in the Bag, that Pwyll, the son of Auwyn, played upon him. And when it was known that thou wast come to dwell in the land, my household came and besought me to transform them into mice, that they might destroy thy corn. And they went the first and the second night, and destroyed thy two crops. And the third night came unto me my wife and the ladies of the court, and besought me to transform them. And I transformed them. Now she is not in her usual health. And had she been in her usual health, thou wouldst not have been able to overtake her; but since this has taken place, and she has been caught, I will restore to thee Pryderi and Rhiannon, and I will take the charm and illusion from off Dyved. Set her therefore free." "I will not set her free yet." "What wilt thou more?" he asked. "I will that there be no more charm upon the seven cantrevs of Dyved, and that none shall be put upon it henceforth; moreover, that vengeance be never taken for this, either upon Pryderi or Rhiannon, or upon me." "All this shalt thou have. And truly thou hast done wisely in asking this. Upon thy head would have lit all this trouble." "Yea," said he, "for fear thereof was it that I required this." "Set now my wife at liberty." "I will not," said he, "until I see Pryderi and Rhiannon with me free." "Behold, here they come," he answered.

And thereupon behold Pryderi and Rhiannon. And he rose up to meet them, and greeted them, and sat down beside them. "Ah, chieftain, set now my wife at liberty," said the bishop. "Hast thou not received all thou didst ask?" "I will release her, gladly," said he. And thereupon he set her free.

Then he struck her with a magic wand, and she was changed back into a young woman, the fairest ever seen.

"Look round upon thy land," said he, "and thou wilt see it all tilled and peopled as it was in its best estate." And he rose up and looked forth. And when he looked he saw all the lands tilled, and full of herds and dwellings.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE SORROWFUL KNIGHT

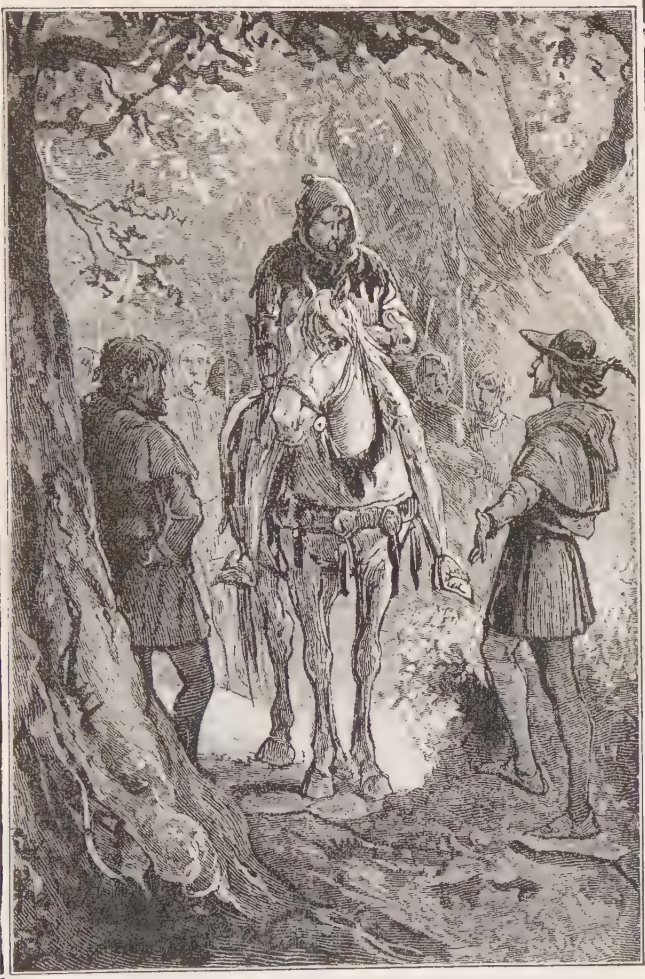
Adapted by W. C. Hazlitt

I

ROBIN stood in Barnsdale, and leaned against a tree. By his side were John, Scathlock, and Much. Presently unto Robin spake John thus:—"Master, an ye would give us the word that we might dine, it were well."

"Nay," quoth Robin, "thereto I have no lust, until I see some baron bold or other guest unbekenned, or some squire or some knight that may pay worthily for his cheer. Take your bows in your hands, good fellows, and leave me here; and walk up to the Sayles, and so on to the Watling Street. Abide there until ye become aware of any that may lighten the cost of our meal."

They went to the Sayles and to the Watling Street; and they looked east and they looked west; and no manner of man might they espy. Yet at the last, as they cast their eyes down a byway in Barnsdale, they perceived where a knight came riding along. Heavy was his bearing and little his pride; one foot was in the stirrup, and the other out. His hood hung over his eyes, and his garb was simple enough: a sorrier man,



"TRULY I HAVE EXPECTED THEE THESE TWO HOURS"

forsooth, never rode in the merry woods on a summer's day.

The yeomen approached him full courteously, and Little John, because he knew that he was of knightly degree, bending his knee at the saddlebows, welcomed him to the forest side. "My master," quoth he, "hath waited dinner for you these three hours past."

"Who is your master?" the knight demanded.

"His name, sir, is Robin Hood."

"He is a good yeoman," the stranger returned, "whom-of I have heard much commendation. Albeit my purpose was to have dined to-day at Blithe or Doncaster, yet I consent with you three to go unto your master."

Then they went all together, and as he rode along the tears stole from his eyes, and coursed down his cheeks. They brought him to the place where their master tarried, who unto him said, as he doffed his headgear, and beseemingly knelt: "Welcome art thou to me, sir knight! Truly I have expected thee these two hours."

"God thee save, good Robin," quoth the knight, "and all thy comrades so gallant and free!"

They sat to their dinner, and numbles of the deer, and waterfowl, and pheasant, with wine and bread in plenty, they had; and Robin bade the knight eat and drink and spare not.

"Gramercy, Robin," said his guest, "such a fair meal have I not seen these three weeks. If ever I come again this way, I trust to give thee as good."

"I am not so nice in the order of my diet," cried Robin. "But since it was never the manner for a yeoman

to pay for a knight's cheer, thou wilt clear the score, wilt thou not, ere thou goest hence?"

"I have nought in my purse," the stranger answered and said, "that I can proffer for shame."

"Tell me truth, sir," quoth Robin, "how much hast thou, all told?"

"Ten shilling and no more," said the other.

"An' so it be," said Robin, "not one penny do I touch, and an thou needest more for thy occasions, I shall freely lend it thee."

Little John searched the knight's mail, and found indeed that he had sooth spoken; and thereupon Robin commanded them to bring wine of the best, and bade the knight drink to his content.

"Tell me now, knight," he presently said, "and I shall keep thy counsel right well: wert thou made a knight *malgré* thyself, or one of yeomanry? Hast thou been an unthrifty husband of thy substance, or an usurer?"

"None of these, by my faith, Robin, have I been," he protested, "for, God is my witness, an hundred winter herebefore my ancestors knights have been. I am called Sir Richard at the Lee. Within this two or three year, my neighbors well know that I could spend four hundred pound by the year. Now have I no goods save my children and my wife, till God amend my estate."

"How hast thou lost thy riches, then?" Robin demanded.

"By my not overwise kindness. I had a son forsooth, Robin, that should have been my heir, and when as he had but twenty winters, jousted he with the

best, and for that he slew on a time a knight of Lancashire; I was fain to lay my estate to pledge to save his life. To the Abbot of St. Mary's at York, Robin, my lands are in gage, and are forfeit, alas! unless so be the money be repaid within a short day. And whereas I have it not, I go to seek grace; and so, farewell, for the time draweth nigh."

"What is the sum?" Robin asked.

"Four hundred pound," said he.

"What, then, wilt thou do, put-case thou losest thy inheritance?"

"I shall cross the salt sea, Robin, and go to the Holy land, where Christ our Saviour was quick and dead, and to the Mount of Calvary." And the tears once more started to his eyes.

"Hast thou no friends?"

"Whenso I was rich of estate, Robin, yea, verily, had I store; but now they shun me, and know me not."

"Pass the wine round," said Robin; "the knight drinks not. Well, and hast thou neither any one who would be thy surety?"

"By Him that died on a tree, none, save, maybe, Peter, Paul, and John."

"Cease thy jesting, knight, for by Him that made me, and shope both sun and moon," said Robin, "nought set I by such warrantise."

"None other have I," quoth he, "unless it be Our Dear Lady, that never yet failed me in my need."

"In faith, thou couldest have no better an one. John, go to my coffers, and tell truly four hundred pounds."

And John went, as he was bidden, and Scathlock with him, and they brought the money to Robin, eighteen score pounds and upwards.

Then Much spake grudgingly, whenas he saw so large a treasure about to go to Sir Richard at the Lee; but John chid him, saying it was a good almsdeed to help so gentle a knight; and withal he prayed Robin, if it were not meet to offer his guest a new livery, that he might appear before the lord abbot as became his condition.

"For ye have scarlet and green, master," said John. "There is many a merchant in England that hath not so rich a store."

And when Robin gave leave, he took his bow, and measured three ells of each color, and at every ell he leapt.

"What devil's-kin draper is this?" muttered Much.

"He may give him all the better measure," cried Scathlock, laughing, "since it costeth him so little."

But John marked them not; and he prevailed on Robin, who was nothing loath, to find him a new gray courser, and a new saddle.

"What dost thou give the knight thyself, John?" Robin inquired.

"Even a pair of gilt spurs, master," he answering said, "that he may pray for all this company."

"To-morrow," said Sir Richard at the Lee, "I must be at St. Mary's to redeem my lands, or they go from me forever. When shall be my day, Robin?"

"This day twelvemonth in this place," the yeoman replied; "and I lend thee John to keep thee company to

York as thy servant, and to aid thee to his power, because it were shame that a knight should go unattended."

The knight set out from Barnsdale, blessing Robin Hood and his men for the best friends that could to him have befallen; and with John at his side pricked forward on his way to the abbey of Our Blessed Lady, merrier in heart than he had weened evermore to be; for in his mail he carried the freedom of his fair lands and his children's heritage.

II

The lord abbot sat in high state at St. Mary's at York, and with him were the high cellarer and the chief justiciary of England and the sheriff of Yorkshire, that were partakers, all of them, in the venture whereby on failure of his day Sir Richard at the Lee, that gentle knight, lost his lands at Utersdale for aye.

The high abbot remembered them all, who were there present, how this day twelvemonth the knight of Utersdale had borrowed of him four hundred pound, and laid his lands in pledge; and that if he came not soon to redeem them, he should suffer disherison.

"It is full early," said the prior; "the day has much to run. I had liever lay down a hundred pound than take away too lightly the knight's belongings. He is maybe beyond sea, and cannot reach England in just time. I wis he may be suffering great hardship; and it were sore pity to deal too strictly with him, and too sternly use our power."

"Thou art ever in my beard," quoth the high abbot.

"He is dead or hanged, doubtless," said the high

cellarer, "and we shall have anon four hundred pounds more to spend by the year."

"He will not come yet, I dare well undertake," said the chief justiciary.

Meanwhile, Sir Richard at the Lee and Little John had ridden well, until they came to the abbey of Our Lady at York, and ere they drew within sight of the gates, that gentle knight threw off his upper habit, and clothed himself in poor weeds, and Little John in like manner; and when they knocked at the gates, the porter opened to them, and showed them how the lord abbot, with many more of high degree, were at their meat.

They descended from their horses, and the porter said: "Lead them into the stable, where they may have whereof to eat, and rest, till ye have for them again need."

"Nay," quoth Little John, "they go not thither by my counsel." And whileas the knight, whose valet for the nonce he was at this time, was brought into the hall, John stayed behind with the horses and the mail wherein the money lay, that they had carried therewithal.

The knight went forth into the hall, where they sat at table, and kneeled down, and in lowly wise saluted the high abbot and all there assembled.

"Sir abbot," said the knight, "I am here to keep my day."

"Thou hast brought with thee the four hundred pound, hast thou not?"

"Not one penny," quoth the knight.

"Thou art a shrewd debtor," cried the abbot. "Sir

justice, it is well; I drink to thee! — What doest thou here, then, sirrah, that thou art before me without the money?"

"I am here, sir abbot, to pray your good lordship of a longer day," he said, and yet knelt.

"The time has come and gone, and thy lands have passed from thee," said the high abbot.

The knight besought the chief justiciary, and likewise the sheriff, and once again the high abbot, that he would lend a merciful ear unto him, and unto the lord abbot: "I will be thy true servant, my lord," quoth he, "till I have well gotten the four hundred pound," and to him still denying: "But I have my land again, full dearly it shall be bought. It is good, lords, to assay a friend, ere a man have of him need."

The lord abbot looked upon that gentle knight full angerly, and bade him quit the hall, calling him a false knight. But he shewed the lord abbot that he spake not truly, for he had never been other than true; and then he rose to his feet, and to the lord abbot he said: "To suffer a knight to kneel so long is scant courtesy. I have been in many a tourney and many a fight, and have ever stood in the front."

"Sir abbot," said the chief justiciary, "what wilt thou give over and above, that the knight may sign a release? Else dare I to swear that never shall ye hold your land in quiet."

"An hundred pound more I will give," said the high abbot.

"Give him two," said the chief justiciary.

"Forbear your reckonings, my lords," said the knight

more firmly. "Not one, nor two hundred, nor a thousand should serve; I will not have, for heir to my lands, abbot, justice, or friar."

They all sat marveling what he might signify, and conferred together. But the knight started to the door of the hall, and returned straightway, bearing in both his hands a bag; to the board where they sat he advanced, and loosening the cords, he shook out four hundred pound.

"Here is the gold, sir abbot," he cried, "that thou diddest lend to me on my lands. Haddest thou been more courteous, thou mightest have had something to boot."

They had all laid down their knives and spoons, and ate and drank no more.

"Sir abbot, and all the others that I see," said the knight, "ye have your money again, agree among you, as ye may; and since my day I have kept, I shall take back my land, whatever ye may do."

He marched straight out of the hall, a proud and jocund man, and found Little John in the court awaiting him; and they took horse and went their way; and whenso they had lost sight of York, they donned again their gayer raiment, and proceeded on their road together, until John took leave of that gentle knight to go unto Nottingham, and Sir Richard at the Lee drew not rein until he came to his own gates at his house in Utersdale in the forest.

"Welcome, my lord," said his wife, "albeit lost is all our good."

"Nay, madam," he replied, "not so; be of better

cheer, and pray for Robin Hood, that his soul may enter into bliss; for without his bounty we had been beggars for a certainty. As I went by the way, madam, I met that excellent yeoman, and he lent unto me the money, wherewith I have freed our lands."

III

The day was at hand when the knight of Utersdale was under covenant to render himself in Barnsdale, and restore to Robin the four hundred pound that so happily redeemed his lands from pawn.

Robin stood in the forest, and with him were John, Scathlock, and Much the Miller's son.

"Shall we go to our nunchion, master?" asked John, for it was mid-day.

"Nay," said Robin; "I doubt that Our Lady is wroth with me, that she sendeth me not my money."

"Have no fear," John replied; "the sun has some way to go ere it set, and I dare answer for the knight, that he is trusty and true."

"Take thy bow in thy hand, John," quoth his master, "and let Scathlock and Much bear thee company, and go up to the Watling Street. Thou mayest by chance alight on some one, be he a messenger from Our Lady or a man that can make us mirth, or a needy yeoman that I might bestead."

Not well pleased was John to go longer fasting; yet he girt on his sword, and they all sallied forth to do as their master had commanded them, and presently they descried a right royal equipage, as it came by the way.

Two black monks went before, each on a fair palfrey, and after them followed seven sumpter-mules well-laden, and men-at-arms fifty and two. No bishop rode more proudly in progress.

"I lay my life," cried John, plucking up his heart again, "that these holy men have brought us our pay. Make ready your bows, my brethren, and fear not. There are but three of us, all told; yet our master will give us a sorry welcome, an we bring not these guests to dine with him this day."

"Stay, churlish monks," John cried, "or you are dead. Full wroth ye have made our master, that stays fasting for you."

"Who is your master?" demanded the foremost monk.

"Robin Hood."

"He is a strong thief, whom-of heard I ever yet no good."

"He is a yeoman of the forest," said John, "and he has bidden you both to dine with him yonder where he lies."

But Much let fly a bolt at one of those holy men, and he fell to the earth; and of those fifty men and two that were set as a guard over the sumpters, all, save a little page and one other, fled out of view.

They led the other monk, that was truly the high cellarer of St. Mary's at York, to the lodge-door, and Robin did off his hood, but the cellarer lacked the like courtesy.

"He is a churl," said John.

"No matter," said Robin. "How many had he with him?"

"Fifty-two and another monk, that we left on the ground."

"Let the horn sound," said Robin, "that we may have company befitting, put-case they should return."

The high cellarer, after he had washed, sat to dinner, and drank of the best, and Robin and John served him right dutifully, till, when all was done, Robin shewed him how he had lent, it was a twelvemonth, a little money to Sir Richard at the Lee, so that he might acquit himself of a debt to St. Mary's. The high cellarer sware that he wist nought of such a matter; but Robin held that because he was an officer of the abbey, he must be the messenger sent to keep the day, and for that he was so true to the time he yielded him great thanks. The high cellarer made a vow, that he had but twenty marks in his mail.

"If it be so," quoth Robin, "thou mayest even keep them, and I will lend thee more an need be."

John spread his mantle on the ground, and out of the cellarer's coffers he took eight hundred pieces and more. "The abbey," said he, "hath doubled our venture."

"Monk," said Robin, in high glee, "Our Lady is the truest woman whom-of I ever heard tell. An I had searched all England through, I could not have placed my money to more profitable usance. Fill of the best wine, John; let the cellarer drink ere he go."

But the cellarer said "Nay," and put spurs to his palfrey, as to go.

"Whither are ye bound, sir?" asked Robin.

"To certain manors in this country," he answered, "whereas our reeves do us wrong."

"Greet well your abbot from me," said Robin, "and your prior also, and pray them well every day to send us such a guest."

IV

In the meantime the knight of Utersdale came not, and seemed like to break his day. But about three hours after noon, as Robin and John and certain others yet lingered on the scene, rode Sir Richard at the Lee in sight, attended by his following; and as he drew near, he alighted from his palfrey and bent his knee to Robin.

"God save thee, good Robin Hood, and all this company," quoth he.

"Rise, gentle knight," quoth Robin; "right welcome art thou to me. And, I pray you, what taketh thee so late to the greenwood?"

"It was my duty, good Robin," he answered; "but I shall tell you, that I was kept at a wrestling, whereby I passed, namely, at Wentbridge, and holp a poor yeoman, whom they would have wronged else."

"'Fore God, thereof give thee thanks, knight; he that aids poor yeomen is my friend."

"Have here, Robin," proceeded the knight, "four hundred pound that I borrowed, and twenty marks for the courtesy."

"Nay," Robin answered; "Our Lady by her cellarer hath already satisfied me; and if I should take it twice, it were a shame indeed. But truly, knight, thou art welcome; and what import these bows and arrows, so fair and fine, that thou hast brought thee-with?"

"A poor gift to thee, Robin."

Robin took them in good part, and then he told the knight all the story about the high cellarer; and over their supper well they laughed.

"And hast thou gotten thy lands securely back into thy hands?" the yeoman demanded.

"Ay, at length; but the abbey labored shrewdly to dispossess me, and sent messengers to London to make suit to our king thereupon; and the high cellarer himself was to have gone thither to moot farther therein, and was only by thee stayed from his purpose."

"He let me understand differently," quoth Robin, "and he was a false monk. What was the wrestling at Wentbridge, knight, whereat thou didst so courteously intervene?"

The knight showed how there was published a wrestling for a prize to the winner of a pair of gloves, a gold ring, and a pipe of wine, and how a stranger yeoman won it; but they denied him his right, and would have slain him forsooth, had he, the knight and his retinue, not ridden into the throng, and for the sake of Robin Hood defended that yeoman, and caused to be delivered unto him the trophies of the day. "And I gave him," added he, "five marks for his wine, that it might be broached, drink who would."

Robin was right glad; and because the knight was not rich, and had spent of his substance not a little in coming thither so accompanied, and in furnishing a hundred bows and the like number of sheaves of arrows, all of the best, his heart opened, and he said to John, as the knight made ready to go before the gloaming: "Fetch me four hundred pound of the cellarer's treasure that he left behind."

Then when John had brought the money, he turned to Sir Richard at the Lee, and said: "Thou wilt keep thy four hundred pound, knight, and four hundred other I count out to thee for thy bows and thy arrows; and if thou ever standest in requirement of more, let me have thy news. But my counsel to thee is, for the time to come be a better husband of thy store."

So they parted for awhile, Sir Richard at the Lee and Robin Hood; and Robin holp him to mount his palfrey, and bade him heartily well to fare.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BUTCHER

By Eva March Tappan

"THANK you kindly, sir," said the little old woman to Robin Hood. "It 's more than once that you 've helped me, when the cow went dry and the pig died. It 's better than a pig that you 've been to me many and many a time, sir. And then there 's the good brown cloth that you gave me for a cloak, sir. There is n't another woman in town that has so fine a cloak. You 'd know it came from over the sea by the feel of it; and there 's folk in the town that has felt of it, too, and it was the sheriff's wife, it was. She came up, tossing her head with all the feathers on it, and followed me in through the door of the church to mass, and —"

"Did you go in through the door ahead of the sheriff's wife?" interrupted Robin, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

"Truly, I did, sir. I said to myself, said I, 'Now I 'm naught but a poor little old woman, and I live in a hut with a thatched roof, and she lives in a stone house; but when the great folk give me such a fine cloak as this, it 's but the reverence that 's due to them to take it into the church before the rain might come to wet it.'"

"And so you went ahead of the sheriff's wife!"

"I did that, and I felt the sheriff's wife a-feeling of it when she went through the door. You 're good to me,

indeed, sir. Will you come into the cottage, and let me make you an oaten cake?"

Robin went into the cottage, and sat down on a wooden stool. The little old woman bustled about, and stirred up the oaten meal and spread it out thin on the board, and set it up before the fire to bake. Then she pulled forward the iron crane, and on the hook she hung a little iron pot full of the nicest porridge that ever was made. Very soon the porridge began to bubble, and the oaten cake was brown as a berry.

"No, no, thank you humbly, sir," said she, "but I'll not sit down, sir. I'll stand by your stool and serve you. It's a proud woman that I am to have you sit at my table, and eat my oaten cake, and drink my porridge." So she poured more and more of the porridge into the wooden bowl, and put piece after piece of the oaten cake on the table beside it.

By and by Robin pushed the stool back from the table.

"So you walk into the church before the sheriff's wife," said he, "and you won't sit down at the table with a simple bowman like me that the sheriff thinks is only fit to be hanged."

"It's a humble little old woman that I am," she answered, "but it's the poor folk that know the real gentlefolk like you, sir. The sheriff's wife is naught but the wife of the sheriff."

"It's time for me to be going," said Robin. "Have you a bit of meat for your dinner?"

"It's oaten cake and porridge that I'll be having for my dinner," answered the little old woman simply.

"There 's the butcher down the road," said Robin, shading his eyes, for the sun was coming up over the trees. "He 's on his way to Nottingham, and we 'll lighten his cart for him; or should you rather have a bit of lightfoot?"

The little old woman began to tremble.

"Don't you, sir," she pleaded, "and don't you be taking it amiss, but I 'm afeard by week-days and afeard by Sundays when I think of you. Won't you get the king's pardon, sir, and then I 'll know you 'll not be hanged on the gallows-tree?"

But Robin had gone down the road, and he called to the butcher: —

"Hoot, man, have you a juicy slice of mutton that 's fit to go under the finest cloak in Nottingham?"

"Indeed, I have, and it 's on its way to the wife of the sheriff," called the butcher.

Robin looked closely at the man and asked slyly: —

"Have you maybe a good bit of lightfoot hidden away in that cart of yours?" Then the butcher laughed and Robin laughed.

"It 's all the fault of the little woman at home," said the butcher. "She said that she worrited by day and worrited by night, and she sent me off to get the king's pardon. The best of women have a bit of foolishness in them."

"And the better they are, the bigger it is," declared Robin gravely, "but it might be that a woman would give good advice. Here 's the little old woman in the cottage yonder, she 's been telling me to get the king's pardon; and when a woman wears a cloak like hers,

a man must hearken well to what she says. I 'll tell you what we 'll do. I 'll try being a butcher for a day. How much is your meat worth?"

"It might be one mark," answered the butcher.

"That 's one, and the use of the horse is two, and the cart, three; and, oh, the frock and the cap. I 'll borrow it all, and I 'll give you four broad marks of gold. Do you take my good green cloak and my hunting-horn and my hat with the feather and bide with the little old woman till I come back. The sheriff shan't be hungering for his meat either. The best slice goes to the little old woman, but the next best goes to the wife of the sheriff, and I 'll carry it to her myself."

"There 's more than one that would grieve if you should fall into trouble," said the butcher.

"And why should one butcher fall into trouble more than another?" queried Robin lightly. "It might be that I 'd bring the sheriff back with me. It 's often enough that he 's sought me to come to him."

Robin put on the long white butcher's frock and the little round cap, and into the cap he stuck a red rosebud, and then he set off for Nottingham.

"Good-by, good-by," he cried to the little old woman; but she only threw her apron over her face and crept into the house.

"Hold, here 's the whip," called the butcher.

"Never a whip do I use for my beasts," cried Robin over his shoulder.

The good horse looked back at Robin. Then she switched her tail and winked her left ear at him, and they set off in the wildest gallop that ever carried a

butcher's cart up the road to Nottingham. One wheel went over a log, and one went over a rock, and the pieces of meat bounded up into the air like hailstones that had struck a roof. The mutton hammered the beef, and the pork pounded the chicken, and again the good horse switched her tail and winked her left ear and galloped on to Nottingham. She dashed through the brook, she scrambled up the hill, she almost rolled down the hill, and the cart was now on one side of the road and now on the other. The ducks called "Quack, quack!" The little dogs ran out to bark at the ducks, and scampered back with their tails between their legs. The cats sat on the fences ready to spit at the dogs, but the cats, too, ran for their lives without ever saying "Pst!" The rooster strutted across the road, and the hens fluttered after him; but they had no time to go back again, for the butcher's cart was upon them. The people in the cottages put their heads out of the windows; but there was nothing to see except a great cloud of dust whirling up the road, so they crossed themselves and bolted the doors; for perhaps the fiend himself was in that cloud of dust, they whispered to one another fearfully. And still the good horse switched her tail and winked her left ear and galloped on to Nottingham.

The keeper of the town gates flung them wide open, and in came Robin, in his long white frock and white cap with the red rosebud in it. Every piece of meat lay still in its place, and the good horse arched her neck and went proudly up the street with the great white cart till she stood in the square in front of the sheriff's house.

"Meat to sell, good meat to sell," cried Robin. The

wife of the sheriff opened the door and came out on the steps.

"How much is your nice, juicy mutton?" asked she.

"A penny a pound," quoth Robin.

"Give me four pounds," said the sheriff's wife quickly, for good mutton was full threepence a pound.

"Here 's a pound weight," cried Robin, and in one hand he caught up a stone as big as his head while in the other he held the nice, juicy piece of mutton. "Here 's a forequarter, that 's one pound; and here 's another forequarter, that 's two pounds. Here 's a hindquarter, that 's three; and here 's the other hindquarter, that 's four."

Then the sheriff's wife ran into the house as fast as she could run to get the sheriff to carry in the meat, for she had no mind to lose such a bargain as that. The sheriff came out and made sure of the two forequarters and the two hindquarters, all for fourpence.

Robin went on calling, "Meat to sell, good meat to sell;" and again the sheriff's wife came out on the steps and asked: —

"How much is your good, tender beef?" and Robin answered: —

"A penny a pound, but I'm to have my own dinner of it."

The sheriff sat behind the shutters, and he whispered to his wife: —

"Ask him to dinner. I've thought of something."

"Will you come to dinner with us?" asked the sheriff's wife. "I 'll buy your beef for a penny, and give you a dinner from it."

"Ay, that will I gladly," answered Robin heartily.

"Come when the sun is on the noon mark in the square," said she; and the sheriff whispered to her from behind the shutter:—

"I know him, I know him. It takes a wise man to be a sheriff, and I can tell who he is."

The other butchers had been gazing with their mouths and their eyes wide open, and one whispered to another:—

"The man 's on a wager; he 's no butcher."

"Yes, he is," said the other softly; "but the poor fellow 's mad."

"Let 's get him away," said the first, "before the sheriff cheats him out of every penny."

"We 'll ask him to dine with us," suggested a third. "We 'll find where he lives, and when the sheriff is taking his nap, we 'll carry him home." So one of them went up to Robin and said:—

"We be all butchers together, sir, and we 've come to ask you to eat dinner with us at the little inn beside the oak-tree."

"Thank you kindly," responded Robin. "He 's no true man who 'll deny one of his own trade. Shall we dine one hour before the sun is on the noon mark in the square?"

"Yes," answered they; and an hour before the sun was on the noon mark in the square, they all went away to the inn. They called for ale and beer and black pudding; but soon Robin began to call, and he called for fish and fowl and veal and marrow pasties and beef and cheese-cakes and tansy-cake and syllabub and jelly and junket and meat and sack. Never in all their lives had the butchers eaten such a dinner.

"However shall we pay the reckoning?" they began to whisper, but Robin kept on calling; and now there came in so many bottles of the inn-keeper's best wine that the good butchers soon forgot all about the reckoning, and they did not even notice when Robin slipped out of the door and left them all sitting around the table.

"Here's a five-pound note for the dinner," he said to the innkeeper, and the innkeeper said: —

"Will you kindly come again, sir?"

"That will I," replied Robin. "Never a day will I sell meat in Nottingham that I do not have a dinner at your own good inn."

It was almost noon by the mark in the square when Robin walked boldly up to the sheriff's front door.

"Come in, come in," called the sheriff. "There's always a welcome for good true men like you."

"I'm grateful for your courtesy," said Robin. "When a man's but a simple butcher, he's humbly thankful for a great man's kindness."

"Oho!" roared the sheriff. "It's a witty fellow that you are. There's no man that likes a good jest better than myself."

"Truly, Master Sheriff," said Robin gravely, "if I'm not a butcher, what am I then? Must not a poor man have some trade?"

"Oh, *I* know well who you are," cried the sheriff, "and there's no man in Nottingham that would be more welcome to my house."

Then in came the sheriff's wife. She wore a blue silk gown that dragged behind her an ell or more. She had beads about her neck and rings on her fingers and a

feather in her hair; and it was all to do honor to Robin, for the sheriff had said to her: —

"Put on your best blue silk gown, and beads around your neck and rings on your fingers and a feather in your hair. I know who he is. His father owned the wide lands to the west of us, and he had the best herd of horned beasts in all Yorkshire. Bring out the oldest wine from the north side of the cellar. The son 's naught but a prodigal, and it won't be my fault if those wide lands and that herd of horned beasts are n't my own before I 'm a day older. We 'll give him wine till his head turns, and then I 'll say, 'Have you any horned beasts to sell?' and I 'll say, 'Have you any good land to sell?' and I 'll get his fine herd of cattle, and I 'll get his land, I will, and it 'll cost me little save the wine that he 'll drink."

"It 's a pity to waste the best wine," said the sheriff's wife; "and I think, if I 'd only held on a bit, I might have had the mutton for twopence instead of four."

"We 'll try to make it up on the land," said the sheriff.

All three sat down to the table. There was the roast beef, and there was not very much besides, for the sheriff's wife had thought: —

"What is the use of wasting a good dinner on a man who 'll drink so much wine that he 'll not know whether he 's had anything to eat or not?"

Robin had some black bread and a piece of roast beef. It was not the best piece either, for the sheriff thought: —

"He 'll be but a beggar in an hour from now, and it won't take so much good wine to turn his head if he 's had little to eat."

Very soon the wine was brought in. Each of them had a wooden cup with a silver rim, and the sheriff filled the cups again and again.

"He 's drunk twice as much as I," said the sheriff to himself in great delight, for he did not know that Robin had poured two glasses out of every three down upon the rushes under the table. Pretty soon the sheriff's wife touched her husband's foot, and he began: —

"And so you 're playing at being a butcher?"

"Yes," said Robin, rather sleepily.

"You sell good meat, but have you by chance any horned beasts to sell?" The sheriff's wife gave a nod and a smile that meant: —

"How well he is doing it!" and Robin answered gravely: —

"Yes, Master Sheriff, I have horned beasts; it might be two or three hundred of them."

"I 'm not buying cattle, but young men like you often need a bit of money; and if you are anxious to sell, I might take them, just to help you along."

The sheriff's wife nodded a deeper nod and smiled a wider smile than before, and the sheriff went on boldly: —

"Perhaps you have a little land that you want to get rid of? Of course you could buy it back again some day, but I 'll take it of you now, if you will. It is n't every man that would do it, but I 'm always ready to oblige a friend in need."

The sheriff's wife nodded till one of her feathers fell off, and when she left the table to fasten it on again, she smiled so loud that Robin asked: —

"What was that?"

"Oh, only the cackling of the hens under the window," answered the sheriff. "And now," said he, "you want the money right away; young folk are always in a hurry; and if you'll take me in your butcher's cart, we'll go and see the horned beasts and the bit of land."

Then the sheriff and Robin climbed up into the cart. Again the good horse switched her tail and winked her left ear, and again she galloped away over logs and rocks and brooks, uphill and downhill.

"But this is the road to the forest," cried the sheriff, in alarm.

"It's the nearest way to my herd of horned beasts," said Robin.

The sheriff was badly frightened, for he thought: "Surely, the fellow's mad;" but he could call upon no one for help, for the gates were fastened, and the doors were bolted, and the shutters of every house that they passed were closed tight. Every man that lived on the road had crossed himself and crept into bed when he heard the wild galloping, for he had thought, "One may escape the fiend once, but not twice."

The sheriff trembled, and clung to the seat to keep from falling out of the cart. Then they turned into the forest road, and now the sheriff trembled so that he shook the cart.

"The saints preserve us from Robin Hood," cried he. "Are you sure that your horned beasts are here?" Just then a herd of deer flashed by.

"Those are my horned beasts," said the wild young butcher, "and all around us is the good free land; and if

you 'll have it, I 'll give you as good a title to it as my father gave to me."

"He 's surely mad," moaned the sheriff; and as they came to a little cottage, he called out: —

"Help, help! Save me from the madman!"

It was the little old woman's cottage. She came running to the door, and when she saw the sheriff, she, too, set up a screaming and a screeching: —

"Oh, Master Robin, Master Robin! The sheriff 's got him, the sheriff 's got him, and he 'll be hanged on the gallows-tree. Oh, oh, oh!"

The real butcher man sat in a corner of the little old woman's cottage, and now he put his head out of the window and blew a long, long blast on Robin's horn. There was a sound of tramping through the woods, and in a minute Little John and his merry company were with them.

"What is your will, Master?" asked they.

"I think it is the sheriff that wants to see you," said Robin soberly.

The sheriff was whiter than the butcher's frock. He had fallen down on his knees, and was shaking more than he had shaken when the cart jolted over the logs and over the rocks. Not a word said Robin's men, but every one of them slowly fitted an arrow to his bow and aimed it at the sheriff.

"Master, shall we shoot?" asked they.

"I 'm afraid you might hit him," answered Robin.

"We 'll just send him home with a present for his wife. It 's she that likes good mutton, and we 'll send her a fourpenny bit." Then a forequarter of mutton

was tied upon the sheriff's right shoulder and another forequarter upon his left shoulder.

"Take a hindquarter in each hand," bade Robin, "and go you straight home to your wife."

So the sheriff went stumbling and staggering under the weight up the long road to the gates of Nottingham. He did not dare to drop his burden, for Robin had said: —

"It 's not fitting for a great man like the sheriff to journey over the land alone, and we 'll give him a goodly band of followers, four and twenty of the best bowmen in the country;" and whenever the sheriff stopped a minute to rest, an arrow would whiz by his ear, and Robin would call out: —

"It 's not courtesy to keep a great lady waiting for a little fourpenny gift like that."

SCANDINAVIAN AND DANISH HEROES

THE STORY OF FRITHIOF

By Julia Goddard

I

IN a cottage overshadowed by wide-spreading oaks, and surrounded by a garden in which bloomed the sweetest flowers of summer, lived an aged peasant named Hilding.

Two children might be seen playing about the garden from sunrise to sunset, but they were not old Hilding's children. The handsome boy was the son of the Thane, Thorsten Vikingsson; the little girl, with dove-like eyes and silken tresses, was the daughter of good King Belé.

Together the little ones played through the long pleasant days in their foster-father's garden, or wandered through the woods, or climbed the hills that sheltered them from the northern winds. The boy would seek treasures from the birds' nests for his fair companion, not even fearing to rob the mountain eagle, so that he might bring the spoil to Ingebjorg. He would also take her far out on the blue sea in his little boat, and Ingebjorg never felt afraid as long as Frithiof was with her.

As Frithiof grew older, he became a great hunter, and once he slew without weapons a fierce bear, which

he brought home in triumph and laid at Ingebjorg's feet.

During the winter evenings, they sat by the blazing logs on the hearth, and Hilding told them wonderful stories of Asgard and all its glories, of Odin the king of the gods, and of the beautiful Friga.

But Frithiof thought she could not be half so beautiful as Ingebjorg. And once he said so to her, and it pleased her exceedingly. And he said, moreover, that when he was a man, Ingebjorg should be his wife. This also she was glad to hear, for she loved Frithiof better than any one in the world.

But Old Hilding told them not to talk nonsense, for Ingebjorg was a king's daughter, and Frithiof but the son of a Thane.

II

In a room of his palace stood King Belé. He was leaning on his sword, musing over all that was past, and thinking of the future. He was an old man, and he felt that his strength was failing him.

With him was his faithful friend Thorsten Vikingsson. They had grown up to manhood together, they had fought in many a battle side by side. They had been companions at many a feast and revel; and now, when old age had fallen upon them, they drew closer to one another, feeling that the hand of death was raised to summon them into another world.

"The end of life is near," said the king; "the shadow of death is cast upon me. No longer do I care for all that men call pleasure. The chase hath lost its charm,

the helmet sits heavy upon my brow, and the mead hath lost its flavor. I would that my sons were here so that I might give them my blessing."

Then the servants summoned to King Belé's presence his two sons, Helgi and Halfdan. Dark was the countenance of Helgi, and there was blood upon his hands, for he had just been assisting at the mid-day sacrifice. But the face of Halfdan was bright as the early morning, and he was as light and joyous as his brother was dark and gloomy.

Frithiof also came, for the Thane Thorsten Vikingsson desired to see him, that he too might bless his son when King Belé blessed the royal princes.

And the two old friends spoke words of wisdom to their children, and prayed that the gods might be with them in peace and war, in joy and sorrow, and grant them a long life and a glorious death.

And when their counsels and prayers were ended, King Belé said, "And now, O sons, I bid you remember, in that day when death shall claim me and my faithful friend, that ye lay our bones side by side near the shore of the great ocean."

III

In due time, King Belé died, and Helgi and Halfdan shared his kingdom between them.

Thorsten Vikingsson died also, and Frithiof became lord of his ancestral home of Framnäs.

Rich treasures did that home contain, three of them of magic power.

The first was the sword of Angurvadel. Blood-red

it shone in time of war, and woe to him who contended with its owner on the battlefield.

Next was an arm-ring of pure gold, made by the god Völund, and given by him to one of Thorsten Vikingsson's forefathers. Once it was stolen and carried to England by the Viking Soté, but Thorsten and his friend King Belé pursued the robber. Over the sea they sailed after the Viking, and landed at a lonely place where the rocks reared up their sharp points and made the coast dangerous.

There were deep caverns which the waters filled when the tide was up, so lone and dark that men were almost afraid to go into them.

But Thorsten Vikingsson and the king his master were not daunted. Hither had they come after the pirate, and here it was that he had last been heard of; and they searched along the shore and in the caves, and peered into every hole and cranny, until their eyes grew strained and heavy, but no Viking Soté was to be seen.

They had almost given up hope of finding him, when, looking through a chink that had hitherto escaped their notice, a fearful sight was seen by the valiant Thane.

Within a mighty vault, forming a still cold tomb, there lay a vessel all complete, with masts and spars and anchor; and on the deck there sat a grim skeleton clad in a robe of flame, and on his skinless arm glittered the golden arm-ring wrought by Völund. The figure held in his left hand a blood-stained sword, from which he was trying to scour away the stains.

"It is my arm-ring," said Thorsten Vikingsson; "it is the spirit of the Viking Soté."

And forthwith he forced his way into the tomb, and, after a deadly conflict with the spectre, regained his treasure.

And the two friends sailed home in triumph.

The third great thing that Frithiof inherited was the dragon-ship Ellide, which his forefathers had won in the following manner: —

One of them, a rough, rude Viking, with a tender heart, was out at sea, and on a wreck that was fast sinking saw an old man with green locks sitting disconsolately.

The good-natured Viking picked him up, took him home, gave him of the best of food and of sparkling mead, and would have lodged him in his house; but the green-haired man said he could not tarry, for he had many miles to sail that night.

"But when the sun comes up in the east," added the stranger, "look for a thank-gift on the wild seashore."

And behold, as morning dawned, the Viking saw a goodly vessel making gallant headway. As she drew near the land with streamer flying and broad sails flapping in the wind, the Viking saw that there was no soul on board of her; and yet, without steersman to guide her, the vessel avoided the shoals and held her way straight to the spot where he was standing.

Her prow was a dragon's head, a dragon's tail formed her stern, and dragon's wings bore her along swifter than an eagle before the storm.

The green-haired stranger was a sea-god, and the dragon-ship Ellide was his thank-gift.

Thus Frithiof, though only the son of a Thane, had treasures that might have been coveted by kings and princes. He sat in his father's halls, surrounded by his companions; upon his right was seated his bosom friend Bjorn, and twelve bold champions clad in steel were ranged around the board. And they drank in silence to the memory of Thorsten Vikingsson.

But suddenly the harps struck up, and the skalds poured forth their songs in honor of the dead Thane.

And Frithiof's eyes filled with tears as he listened to his father's praises.

IV

In spite of Frithiof's wealth, Helgi and Halfdan looked with disdain upon the son of their father's friend; and when Frithiof asked to have Ingebjorg for his wife, Helgi scornfully answered, "My sister shall not wed the son of a Thane. If you like to be our serf, we will make room for you among our servants."

Then went Frithiof away in wrath.

There was another suitor for the hand of Ingebjorg, good old King Ring, who, having lost his wife, thought that the Lily of the North would make a tender mother to his little son.

And he sent to Helgi and Halfdan to ask for Ingebjorg in marriage, but the brothers treated him as they had treated Frithiof; and the old king was roused, and he swore he would revenge himself.

Helgi and Halfdan were afraid when they found that Ring was really making ready for war. They began to get their army into order, and placed Ingebjorg for

safety in the temple of Balder, and in their distress they even sent to Frithiof to ask him to come and help them.

They chose wisely in the messenger they sent to plead for them, for it was none other than old Hilding, who had been so kind to Frithiof in his childhood.

Frithiof was playing at chess with Bjorn when Hilding arrived. He pretended not to hear the message, and went on with his game.

"Shall the pawn save the king?" he asked of Bjorn.

And after a time he added: "There is no other way to save the queen." Which showed that he had been all the time occupied with Hilding's errand.

Therefore he returned with the old peasant, and contrived to see Ingebjorg in the temple of Balder, and found that she still loved him as much as he loved her, and did not wish to marry any one else.

And again he asked Helgi and Halfdan if they were willing that Ingebjorg should be his wife.

And again the brothers said, Nay, with scorn, and told him that he had profaned the temple of Balder by speaking to Ingebjorg within its walls.

"For such a misdeed," said Helgi, "death or banishment is the doom, and thou art in our power. Nevertheless, we are willing, as we wish to make thee useful to us, to forego the penalty. Thou shalt therefore sail forth to the distant Orkney Isles, and compel Jarl Angantyr to pay the tribute that he owes us."

Frithiof would have refused to go, but Ingebjorg persuaded him to undertake the mission; for she was

afraid of her brothers, and knew that Frithiof would be safer on the wild seas than in their hands.

At last Frithiof consented, and he took leave of Ingebjorg, and placed the golden bracelet that Völund had made upon her arm, praying her to keep it for his sake.

And then he sailed away over the heaving waters, and Ingebjorg mourned that her lover was gone.

V

Over the sea. It was calm enough when Frithiof started; the storm-winds were asleep, and the waters heaved gently as though they would fain help speed the dragon-ship peacefully on her way.

But King Helgi standing on a rock repented that he had suffered the noble Frithiof to escape his malice; and as he watched the good ship Ellide riding over the sea, he prayed loudly to the ocean fiends that they would trouble the waters and raise a fierce tempest to swallow up Frithiof and the dragon-ship.

All at once, the sparkling sea turned leaden gray, and the billows began to roll, the skies grew dark, and the howl of the driving wind was answered by a sullen roar from the depths beneath. Suddenly, a blinding flash of lightning played around the vessel, and as it vanished the pealing thunder burst from the clouds. The raging sea foamed, and seethed, and tossed the vessel like a feather upon its angry waves, and deeper sounded the thunder, and more fiercely flashed the lightning round the masts.

Wilder, wilder, wilder, grew the storm. Alas, for Frithiof!

"Ho! take the tiller in hand," shouted Frithiof to Bjorn, "and I will mount to the topmost mast and look out for danger."

And when he looked out, he saw the storm-fiends riding on a whale. One was in form like to a great white bear, the other like unto a terrible eagle.

"Now help me, O gift of the sea-god! Help me, my gallant Ellide!" cried Frithiof.

And the dragon-ship heard her master's voice, and with her keel she smote the whale; so he died, and sank to the bottom of the sea, leaving the storm-fiends tossing upon the waves.

"Ho, spears and lances, help me in my need!" shouted Frithiof, as he took aim at the monsters.

And he transfixed the shrieking storm-fiends, and left them entangled in the huge coils of seaweed which the storm had uprooted.

"Ho, ho!" laughed rugged Bjorn, "they are trapped in their own nets."

And so they were; and they were so much taken up with trying to free themselves from the seaweed and from Frithiof's long darts, that they were unable to give any heed to the storm, which therefore went down, and Frithiof and his crew sailed on, and reached the Orkney Isles in safety.

"Here comes Frithiof," said the Viking Atlé. "I know him by his dragon-ship."

And forthwith the Viking rose and went forth; he had heard of the strength of Frithiof, and wished to match himself against him.

He did not wait to see whether Frithiof came in

enmity or friendship. Fighting was the first thing he thought of, and what he most cared for.

However, the Viking had the worst of it in the battle.

"There is witchcraft in thy sword," said he to Frithiof.

So Frithiof threw his sword aside, and they wrestled together, unarmed, until Atlé was brought to the ground.

Then spake Frithiof: "And if I had my sword thou wouldst not long be a living man."

"Fetch it, then," replied Atlé. "I swear by the gods that I will not move until thou dost return."

So Frithiof fetched his sword, but when he saw the conquered Viking still upon the ground, he could not bring himself to slay so honorable a man.

"Thou art too true and brave to die," said Frithiof. "Rise, let us be friends."

And the two combatants went hand in hand to the banquet hall of Angantyr, Jarl of the Orkney Islands.

A splendid hall it was, and a rare company of heroes was there; and all listened eagerly as Frithiof told his story, and wherefore he had come.

"I never paid tribute to King Belé, though he was an old friend of mine," said the Jarl, as Frithiof ended his speech, "nor will I to his sons. If they want aught of me, let them come and take it."

"It was by no choice of my own that I came upon such an errand," returned Frithiof, "and I shall be well content to carry back your answer."

"Take also this purse of gold in token of friendship," continued the Jarl, "and remain with us, for I knew thy father."

Thus Frithiof and the Jarl became good friends, and Frithiof consented to stay for a while in the Orkney Islands; but after a time he ordered out his good ship Ellide, and set sail for his native land.

VI

But fearful things had come to pass since he had left his home! Framnäs, the dwelling of his fathers, was a heap of ruins, and the land was waste and desolate.

And as he stood upon the well-loved spot, striving to find some traces of the past, his faithful hound bounded forth to greet him, and licked his master's hand. And then his favorite steed drew near, and thrust his nose into Frithiof's hand, hoping to find therein a piece of bread, as in the days of old. His favorite falcon perched upon his shoulder, and this was Frithiof's welcome to the home of his ancestors.

There had been a fierce battle, for King Ring with his army had come against Helgi and Halfdan, and the country had been laid waste, and many warriors slain.

And when all chance of withstanding him was at an end, the brothers, rather than lose their kingdom, had consented that Ingebjorg should be the wife of Ring.

Ingebjorg was married! Frithiof's heart was full of deep sorrow, and he turned his steps towards the temple of Balder, hoping that at the altar of the god he might meet with consolation.

In the temple he found King Helgi, and the sorrow that was weighing down Frithiof's heart gave place to hatred and revenge.

Caring nothing for the sacred place, he rushed madly forward. "Here, take thy tribute," said he, and he threw the purse that Jarl Angantyr had given him with such force against the face of the king that Helgi fell down senseless on the steps of the altar.

Next, seeing his arm-ring on the arm of the statue, for Helgi had taken it from Ingebjorg and placed it there, he tried to tear it off, and, lo! the image tottered and fell upon the fire that was burning with sweet perfumes before it.

Scarcely had it touched the fire when it was ablaze, and the flames spreading rapidly on every side, the whole temple was soon a smouldering heap of ruins.

Then Frithiof sought his ship. He vowed that he would lead a Viking's life, and leave forever a land where he had suffered so much sorrow. And he put out to sea.

But no sooner were his sails spread than he saw ten vessels in chase of him, and on the deck of one stood Helgi, who had been rescued from the burning temple, and had come in chase of him.

Yet Frithiof was rescued from the danger as if by miracle; for one by one the ships sank down as though some water giant had stretched out his strong arm, and dragged them below, and Helgi only saved himself by swimming ashore.

Loud laughed Bjorn.

"I bored holes in them last night," said he; "it is a rare ending to Helgi's fleet."

"And now," said Frithiof, "I will forever lead a Viking's life. I care not for aught upon the land. The

sea shall be my home. And I will seek climes far away from here."

So he steered the good ship Ellide southward, and among the isles of Greece strove to forget the memories of bygone days.

VII

In and out of the sunny islands that lay like bosses of emerald on a silver shield sailed Frithiof, and on the deck of the dragon-ship he rested through the summer nights, looking up at the moon, and wondering what she could tell him of his northern land.

Sometimes he dreamed of his home as it was before the war-time. Sometimes he dreamed of the days when he and Ingebjorg roamed through the fields and woods together, or listened to old Hilding's stories by the blazing hearth; and then he would wake up with a start and stroke his faithful hound, who was ever near him, saying, "Thou alone knowest no change; to thee all is alike, so long as thy master is with thee."

One night, however, as Frithiof was musing on the deck of his vessel, gazing into the cloudless sky, a vision of the past rose up before him: old familiar faces crowded round him, and in their midst he marked one, best beloved of all, pale, sad, with sorrowful eyes; and her lips moved, and he seemed to hear her say, "I am very sad without thee, Frithiof."

Then a great longing came upon Frithiof to see Ingebjorg once more. He would go northward, even to the country of King Ring; he must see Ingebjorg. What did he care for danger? He must go.

To the cold, dark north.

Yet he dared not go openly, for King Ring looked upon him as an enemy, and would seize him at once, and if he did not kill him would shut him up in prison, so that either way he would not see the beautiful queen.

Frithiof therefore disguised himself as an old man, and, wrapped in bearskins, presented himself at the palace.

The old king sat upon his throne, and at his side was Ingebjorg the Fair, looking like spring by the side of fading autumn.

As the strangely dressed figure passed along, the courtiers jeered, and Frithiof, thrown off his guard, angrily seized one of them, and twirled him round with but little effort.

"Ho!" said the king, "thou art a strong old man, O stranger! Whence art thou?"

"I was reared in anguish and want," returned Frithiof; "sorrow has filled a bitter cup for me, and I have almost drunk it to the dregs. Once I rode upon a dragon, but now it lies dead upon the seashore, and I am left in my old age to burn salt upon the strand."

"Thou art not old," answered the wise king; "thy voice is clear, and thy grasp is strong. Throw off thy rude disguise, that we may know our guest."

Then Frithiof threw aside his bearskin, and appeared clad in a mantle of blue embroidered velvet, and his hair fell like a golden wave upon his shoulder.

Ring did not know him, but Ingebjorg did; and when she handed the goblet for him to drink, her color went and came "like to the northern light on a field of snow."

"O STRANGER! WHENCE ART THOU?"

And Frithiof stayed at the court until the year came round again, and spring once more put forth its early blossoms.

One day a gay hunting train went forth, but old King Ring, not being strong, as in former years, lay down to rest upon the mossy turf beneath some arching pines, whilst the hunters rode on.

Then Frithiof drew near, and in his heart wild thoughts arose. One blow of his sword, and Ingebjorg was free to be his wife.

But as he looked upon the sleeping king, there came a whisper from a better voice, "It is cowardly to strike a sleeping foe."

And Frithiof shuddered, for he was too brave a man to commit murder.

"Sleep on, old man," he muttered gently to himself.

But Ring's sleep was over. He started up. "O Frithiof, why hast thou come hither to steal an old man's bride?"

"I came not hither for so dark a purpose," answered Frithiof; "I came but to look on the face of my loved Ingebjorg once more."

"I know it," replied the king; "I have tried thee, I have proved thee, and true as tried steel hast thou passed through the furnace. Stay with us yet a little longer, the old man soon will be gathered to his fathers, then shall his kingdom and his wife be thine."

But Frithiof replied that he had already remained too long, and that on the morrow he must depart.

Yet he went not; for death had visited the palace, and old King Ring was stretched upon his bier, whilst the bards around sang of his wisdom.

Then arose a cry among the people, "We must choose a king!"

And Frithiof raised aloft upon his shield the little son of Ring.

"Here is your king," he said, "the son of wise old Ring."

The blue-eyed child laughed and clapped his hands as he beheld the glittering helmets and glancing spears of the warriors. Then tired of his high place, he sprang down into the midst of them.

Loud uprose the shout, "The child shall be our king, and the Jarl Frithiof regent. Hail to the young king of the Northmen!"

VIII

But Frithiof in the hour of his good fortune did not forget that he had offended the gods. He must make atonement to Balder for having caused the ruin of his temple. He must turn his steps once more homeward.

Home! Home! And on his father's grave he sank down with a softened heart, and grieved over the passion and revenge that had swayed his deeds. And as he mourned, the voices of unseen spirits answered him, and whispered that he was forgiven.

And to his wondering eyes a vision was vouchsafed, and the temple of Balder appeared before him, rebuilt in more than its ancient splendor, and deep peace sank into the soul of Frithiof.

"Rise up, rise up, Frithiof, and journey onward."

The words came clear as a command to Frithiof, and he obeyed them. He rose up, and journeyed to the

place where he had left the temple a heap of blackened ruins.

And, lo! the vision that had appeared to him was accomplished, for there stood the beautiful building, stately and fair to look upon. So beautiful, that, as he gazed, his thoughts were of Valhalla.

He entered, and the white-robed, silver-bearded priest welcomed the long absent Viking, and told him that Helgi was dead, and Halfdan reigned alone.

"And know, O Frithiof," said the aged man, "that Balder is better pleased when the heart grows soft and injuries are forgiven, than with the most costly sacrifices. Lay aside forever all thoughts of hatred and revenge, and stretch out to Halfdan the hand of friendship."

Joy had softened all Frithiof's feelings of anger, and, advancing to Halfdan, who was standing near the altar, he spoke out manfully.

"Halfdan," he said, "let us forget the years that have gone by. Let all past evil and injury be buried in the grave. Henceforth let us be as brothers, and once more I ask thee, give me Ingebjorg to be my wife."

And Halfdan made answer, "Thou shalt be my brother."

And as he spoke, an inner door flew open, and a sweet chorus of youthful voices was heard. A band of maidens issued forth, and at their head walked Ingebjorg, fairer than ever.

Then Halfdan, leading her to Frithiof, placed her hand within that of the Viking.

"Behold thy wife," said Halfdan. "Well hast thou won her. May the gods attend upon your bridal."

So Ingebjorg became the wife of Frithiof at last.

Thus steps of sorrow had but led them to a height of happiness that poets love to sing. Paths thick with thorns had blossomed into roses, and wreaths of everlasting flowers had crowned the winter snows. And midst the lights and shadows of the old Northland, their lives flowed on like to two united streams that roll through quiet pastures to the ocean of eternity.

HAVELOK

By George W. Cox and E. H. Jones

THERE was once a king of England named Athelwold. Earl, baron, thane, knight, and bondsman, all loved him; for he set on high the wise and the just man, and put down the spoiler and the robber. At that time a man might carry gold about with him, as much as fifty pounds, and not fear loss. Chapmen and merchants bought and sold at their ease without danger of plunder. But it was bad for the evil person and for such as wrought shame, for they had to lurk and hide away from the king's wrath; yet was it unavailing, for he searched out the evil-doer and punished him, wherever he might be. The fatherless and the widow found a sure friend in the king; he turned not away from the complaint of the helpless, but avenged them against the oppressor, were he never so strong. Kind was he to the poor, neither at any time thought he the fine bread upon his own table too good to give to the hungry.

But a death-sickness fell on King Athelwold, and when he knew that his end was near he was greatly troubled, for he had one little daughter of tender age, named Goldborough, and he grieved to leave her.

"O my little daughter, heir to all the land, yet so young thou canst not walk upon it; so helpless that thou canst not tell thy wants, and yet had need to give command-

ment like a queen! For myself I would not care, being old and not afraid to die. But I had hoped to live till thou should'st be of age to wield the kingdom; to see thee ride on horseback through the land, and round about a thousand knights to do thy bidding. Alas, my little child, what will become of thee when I am gone?"

Then King Athelwold summoned his earls and barons, from Roxborough to Dover, to come and take counsel with him as he lay a-dying on his bed at Winchester. And when they all wept sore at seeing the king so near his end, he said, "Weep not, good friends, for since I am brought to death's door your tears can in nowise deliver me; but rather give me your counsel. My little daughter that after me shall be your queen; tell me in whose charge I may safely leave both her and England till she be grown of age to rule?"

And with one accord they answered him, "In the charge of Earl Godrich of Cornwall, for he is a right wise and a just man, and held in fear of all the land. Let him be ruler till our queen be grown."

Then the king sent for a fair linen cloth, and thereon having laid the mass-book and the chalice and the paton, he made Earl Godrich swear upon the holy bread and wine to be a true and faithful guardian of his child, without blame or reproach, tenderly to entreat her, and justly to govern the realm till she should be twenty winters old; then to seek out the best, the bravest, and the strongest man as husband for her and deliver up the kingdom to her hand. And when Earl Godrich had so sworn, the king shrived him clean of all his sins. Then

having received his Saviour he folded his hands, saying, "Domine, in manus tuas;" and so died.

There was sorrow and mourning among all the people for the death of good King Athelwold. Many the mass that was sung for him and the psalter that was said for his soul's rest. The bells tolled and the priests sang, and the people wept; and they gave him a kingly burial.

Then Earl Godrich began to govern the kingdom; and all the nobles and all the churls, both free and thrall, came and did allegiance to him. He set in all the castles strong knights in whom he could trust, and appointed justices and sheriffs and peace-sergeants in all the shires. So he ruled the country with a firm hand, and not a single wight dare disobey his word, for all England feared him. Thus, as the years went on, the earl waxed wonderly strong and very rich.

Goldborough, the king's daughter, throve and grew up the fairest woman in all the land, and she was wise in all manner of wisdom that is good and to be desired. But when the time drew on that Earl Godrich should give up the kingdom to her, he began to think within himself, — "Shall I, that have ruled so long, give up the kingdom to a girl, and let her be queen and lady over me? And to what end? All these strong earls and barons, governed by a weaker hand than mine, would throw off the yoke and split up England into little baronies, evermore fighting betwixt themselves for mastery. There would cease to be a kingdom, and so there would cease to be a queen. She cannot rule it, and she shall not have it. Besides, I have a son. Him will I teach to rule and make him king."

So the earl let his oath go for nothing, and went to Winchester where the maiden was, and fetched her away and carried her off to Dover to a castle that is by the seashore. Therein he shut her up and dressed her in poor clothes, and fed her on scanty fare; neither would he let any of her friends come near her.

Now there was in Denmark a certain king called Birkabeyn, who had three children, two daughters and a son. And Birkabeyn fell sick, and knowing that death had stricken him, he called for Godard, whom he thought his truest friend, and said, "Godard, here I commend my children to thee. Care for them, I pray thee, and bring them up as befits the children of a king. When the boy is grown and can bear a helm upon his head and wield a spear, I charge thee make him king of Denmark. Till then hold my estate and royalty in charge for him." And Godard swore to guard the children zealously, and to give up the kingdom to the boy. Then Birkabeyn died and was buried. But no sooner was the king laid in his grave than Godard despised his oath; for he took the children, Havelok, and his two little sisters, Swanborough and Helfled, and shut them up in a castle with barely clothes to cover them. And Havelok, the eldest, was scarce three years old.

One day Godard came to see the children, and found them all crying for hunger and cold; and he said angrily, "How now! What is all this crying about?" The boy Havelok answered him, "We are very hungry, for we get scarce anything to eat. Is there no more corn, that men cannot make bread and give us? We are very hungry." But his little sisters only sate shivering with

the cold, and sobbing, for they were too young to be able to speak. The cruel Godard cared not. He went to where the little girls sate, and drew his knife, and took them up one after another and cut their throats. Havelok, seeing this sorry sight, was terribly afraid, and fell down on his knees begging Godard to spare his life. So earnestly he pleaded that Godard was fain to listen: and listening he looked upon the knife, red with the children's blood; and when he saw the still, dead faces of the little ones he had slain, and looked upon their brother's tearful face praying for life, his cruel courage failed him quite. He laid down the knife. He would that Havelok were dead, but feared to slay him for the silence that would come. So the boy pleaded on; and Godard stared at him as though his wits were gone; then turned upon his heel and came out from the castle. "Yet," he thought, "if I should let him go, one day he may wreak me mischief and perchance seize the crown. But if he dies, my children will be lords of Denmark after me." Then Godard sent for a fisherman whose name was Grim, and he said, "Grim, thou wottest well thou art my thrall. Do now my bidding, and to-morrow I shall make thee free and give thee gold and land. Take this child with thee to-night when thou goest a-fishing, and at moonrise cast him in the sea, with a good anchor fast about his neck to keep him down. To-day I am thy master and the sin is mine. To-morrow thou art free."

Then Grim took up the child and bound him fast, and having thrust a gag of clouts into his mouth so that he could not speak, he put him in a bag and took him on

his back and carried him home. When Grim got home his dame took the bag from off his shoulders and cast it down upon the ground within doors; and Grim told her of his errand. Now as it drew to midnight he said, "Rise up, dame, and blow up the fire to light a candle, and get me my clothes, for I must be stirring." But when the woman came into the room where Havelok lay, she saw a bright light round the boy's head, as it had been a sunbeam, and she called to her husband to come and see. And when he came they both marveled at the light and what it might mean, for it was very bright and shining. Then they unbound Havelok and took away the gag, and turning down his shirt they found a king-mark fair and plain upon his right shoulder. "God help us, dame," said Grim, "but this is surely the heir of Denmark, son of Birkabeyn our king! Ay, and he shall be king in spite of Godard." Then Grim fell down at the boy's feet and did him obeisance, and said "Forgive me, my king, for that I knew thee not. We are thy thralls, and henceforth will feed and clothe thee till thou art grown a man and can bear shield and spear. Then deal thou kindly by me and mine, as I shall deal to thee. But fear not Godard. He shall never know, and I shall be a bondsman still, for I will never be free till thou, my king, shall set me free."

Then was Havelok very glad, and he sat up and begged for bread. And they hasted and fetched bread and cheese and butter and milk; and for very hunger the boy ate up the whole loaf, for he was well-nigh famished. And after he had eaten, Grim made a fair bed and undressed Havelok and laid him down to rest,

saying, "Sleep, my son; sleep fast and sound and have no care, for nought shall harm thee."

On the morrow Grim went to Godard, and telling him he had drowned the boy, asked for his reward. But Godard bade him go home and remain a thrall, and be thankful that he was not hanged for so wicked a deed. After awhile Grim, beginning to fear that both himself and Havelok might be slain, sold all his goods, his corn, and cattle, and fowls, and made ready his little ship, tarring and pitching it till not a seam nor a crack could be found, and setting a good mast and sail therein. Then with his wife, his three sons, his two daughters, and Havelok, he entered into the ship and sailed away from Denmark; and a strong north wind arose and drove the vessel to England, and carried it up the Humber so far as Lindesay, where it grounded on the sands. Grim got out of the boat with his wife and children and Havelok, and then drew it ashore.

On the shore he built a house of earth and dwelt therein, and from that time the place was called Grimsby, after Grim.

Grim did not want for food, for he was a good fisherman both with net and hook, and he would go out in his boat and catch all manner of fish — sturgeons, turbot, salmon, cod, herrings, mackerel, flounders, plaice, lampreys, and thornback, and he never came home empty-handed. He had four panniers made for himself and his sons, and in these they used to carry the fish to Lincoln, to sell them, coming home laden with meat and meal, and simnel cakes, and hemp and rope to make new nets and lines. Thus they lived for twelve years.

But Havelok saw that Grim worked very hard, and being now grown a strong lad, he bethought him "I eat more than Grim and all his five children together, and yet do nothing to earn the bread. I will no longer be idle, for it is a shame for a man not to work." So he got Grim to let him have a pannier like the rest, and next day took out a great heaped basket of fish, and sold them well, bringing home silver money for them. After that he never stopped at home idle. But soon there arose a great dearth, and corn grew so dear that they could not take fish enough to buy bread for all. Then Havelok, since he needed so much to eat, determined that he would no longer be a burden to the fisherman. So Grim made him a coat of a piece of an old sail, and Havelok set off to Lincoln barefoot to seek for work.

It so befell that Earl Godrich's cook, Bertram, wanted a scullion, and took Havelok into his service. There was plenty to eat and plenty to do. Havelok drew water and chopped wood, and brought turves to make fires, and carried heavy tubs and dishes, but was always merry and blythe. Little children loved to play with him; and grown knights and nobles would stop to talk and laugh with him, although he wore nothing but rags of old sail-cloth which scarcely covered his great limbs, and all admired how fair and strong a man God had made him. The cook liked Havelok so much that he bought him span-new clothes, with shoes and hosen; and when Havelok put them on, no man in the kingdom seemed his peer for strength and beauty. He was the tallest man in Lincoln, and the strongest in England.

Earl Godrich assembled a Parliament in Lincoln,

and afterward held games. Strong men and youths came to try for mastery at the game of putting the stone. It was a mighty stone, the weight of an heifer. He was a stalwart man who could lift it to his knee, and few could stir it from the ground. So they strove together, and he who put the stone an inch farther than the rest was to be made champion. But Havelok, though he had never seen the like before, took up the heavy stone, and put it full twelve foot beyond the rest, and after that none would contend with him. Now this matter being greatly talked about, it came to the ears of Earl Godrich, who bethought him, — "Did not Athelwold bid me marry his daughter to the strongest man alive? In truth, I will marry her to this cook's scullion. That will abase her pride; and when she is wedded to a thrall she will be powerless to injure me. That will be better than shutting her up; better than killing her." So he sent and brought Goldborough to Lincoln, and set the bells a-ringing, and pretended great joy, for he said, "Goldborough, I am going to spouse thee to the fairest and stalwartest man living." But Goldborough answered she would never wed with any but a king. "Ay, ay, my girl; and so thou wouldst be queen and lady over me? But thy father made me swear to give thee to the strongest man in England, and that is Havelok, the cook's scullion; so lief or loth to-morrow thou shalt wed." Then the earl sent for Havelok and said, "Master, wilt wive?" "Not I," said Havelok; "for I cannot feed nor clothe a wife. I have neither stick nor stem — no house, no cloth, no victuals. The very clothes I wear do not belong to me, but to Bertram the

cook, as I do." "So much the better," said the earl; "but thou shalt either wive with her that I shall bring thee, or else hang upon a tree. So choose." Then Havelok said he would sooner wive. Earl Godrich went back to Goldborough and threatened her with burning on a stake unless she yielded to his bidding. So, thinking it God's will, the maid consented. And on the morrow they were wed by the Archbishop of York, who had come down to the Parliament, and the earl told money out upon the mass-book for her dower.

Now after he was wed, Havelok wist not what to do, for he saw how greatly Earl Godrich hated him. He thought he would go and see Grim. When he got to Grimsby he found that Grim was dead, but his children welcomed Havelok and begged him bring his wife thither, since they had gold and silver and cattle. And when Goldborough came, they made a feast, sparing neither flesh nor fowl, wine nor ale. And Grim's sons and daughters served Havelok and Goldborough.

Sorrowfully Goldborough lay down at night, for her heart was heavy at thinking she had wedded a thrall. But as she fretted she saw a light, very bright like a blaze of fire, which came out of Havelok's mouth. And she thought "Of a truth but he must be nobly born." Then she looked on his shoulder, and saw the king-mark, like a fair cross of red gold, and at the same time she heard an angel say, —

"Goldborough, leave sorrowing, for Havelok is a king's son, and shall be king of England and of Denmark, and thou queen."

Then was Goldborough glad, and kissed Havelok,

who, straightway waking, said, "I have seen a strange dream. I dreamed I was on a high hill, whence I could see all Denmark; and I thought as I looked that it was all mine. Then I was taken up and carried over the salt sea to England, and methought I took all the country and shut it within my hand." And Goldborough said, "What a good dream is this! Rejoice, for it betokeneth that thou shalt be king of England and of Denmark. Take now my counsel and get Grim's sons to go with thee to Denmark."

In the morning Havelok went to the church and prayed God speed him in his undertaking. Then he came home and found Grim's three sons just going off a-fishing. Their names were Robert the Red, William Wendut, and Hugh Raven. He told them who he was, how Godard had slain his sisters, and delivered him over to Grim to be drowned, and how Grim had fled with him to England. Then Havelok asked them to go with him to Denmark, promising to make them rich men. To this they gladly agreed, and having got ready their ship and victualed it, they set sail with Havelok and his wife for Denmark. The place of their landing was hard by the castle of a Danish earl named Ubbe, who had been a faithful friend to King Birkabeyn. Havelok went to Earl Ubbe, with a gold ring for a present, asking leave to buy and sell goods from town to town in that part of the country. Ubbe, beholding the tall, broad-shouldered, thick-chested man, so strong and cleanly made, thought him more fit for a knight than for a peddler. He bade Havelok bring his wife and come and eat with him at his table. So Havelok went to fetch Goldborough, and

Robert the Red and William Wendut led her between them till they came to the castle, where Ubbe, with a great company of knights, welcomed them gladly. Havelok stood a head taller than any of the knights, and when they sat at table Ubbe's wife ate with him, and Goldborough with Ubbe. It was a great feast, and after the feast Ubbe sent Havelok and his friends to Bernard Brown, bidding him take care of them till next day. So Bernard received the guests and gave them a rich supper.

Now in the night there came sixty-one thieves to Bernard's house. Each had a drawn sword and a long knife, and they called to Bernard to undo the door. He started up and armed himself, and told them to go away. But the thieves defied him, and with a great boulder-stone brake down the door. Then Havelok, hearing the din, rose up, and seizing the bar of the door stood on the threshold and threw the door wide open, saying, "Come in, I am ready for you!" First came three against him with their swords, but Havelok slew these with the door bar at a single blow; the fourth man's crown he brake; he smote the fifth upon the shoulders, the sixth athwart the neck, and the seventh on the breast; so they fell dead. Then the rest drew back and began to fling their swords like darts at Havelok, till they had wounded him in twenty places. For all that, in a little while he killed a score of the thieves. Then Hugh Raven, waking up, called Robert and William Wendut. One seized a staff, each of the others a piece of timber big as his thigh, and Bernard his axe, and all three ran out to help Havelok. So well Havelok and his fellows laid about them, break-

ing ribs and arms and shanks, and cracking crowns, that not a thief of all the sixty-one was left alive. Next morning, when Ubbe rode past and saw the sixty-one dead bodies, and heard what Havelok had done, he sent and brought both him and Goldborough to his own castle, and fetched a leech to tend his wounds, and would not hear of his going away ; for, said he, "This man is better than a thousand knights."

Now that same night, after he had gone to bed, Ubbe awoke about midnight and saw a great light shining from the chamber where Havelok and Goldborough lay. He went softly to the door and peeped in to see what it meant. They were lying fast asleep, and the light was streaming from Havelok's mouth. Ubbe went and called his knights, and they also came in and saw this marvel. It was brighter than a hundred burning tapers; bright enough to choose money by. Havelok lay on his left side with his back towards them, uncovered to the waist; and they saw the king-mark on his right shoulder sparkle like shining gold and carbuncle. Then knew they that it was King Birkabeyn's son, and seeing how like he was to his father, they wept for joy. Thereupon Havelok awoke, and all fell down and did him homage, saying he should be their king. On the morrow Ubbe sent far and wide and gathered together earl and baron, dreng [servant] and thane, clerk, knight and burgess, and told them all the treason of Godard, and how Havelok had been nurtured and brought up by Grim in England. Then he showed them their king, and the people shouted for joy at having so fair and strong a man to rule them. And first Ubbe sware

fealty to Havelok, and after him the others both great and small. And the sheriffs and constables and all that held castles in town or burg came out and promised to be faithful to him. Then Ubbe drew his sword and dubbed Havelok a knight, and set a crown upon his head and made him king. And at the crowning they held merry sports, — jousting with sharp spears, tilting at the shield, wrestling, and putting the stone. There were harpers and pipers and gleemen with their tabours; and for forty days a feast was held with rich meats in plenty and the wine flowed like water. And first the king made Robert and William Wendut and Hugh Raven all barons, and gave them land and fee. Then when the feast was done, he set out with a thousand knights and five thousand sergeants to seek for Godard. Godard was a-hunting with a great company of men, and Robert riding on a good steed found him and bade him come to the king. Godard smote him and set on his knights to fight with Robert and the king's men. They fought till ten of Godard's men were slain; the rest began to flee. "Turn again, O knights!" cried Godard; "I have fed you and shall feed you yet. Forsake me not in such a plight." So they turned about and fought again. But the king's men slew every one of them, and took Godard and bound him and brought him to Havelok. Then King Havelok summoned all his nobles to sit in judgment and say what should be done to such a traitor. And they said, "Let him be dragged to the gallows at the mare's tail, and hanged by the heels in fetters, with this writing over him, 'This is he that reft the king

out from the land, and the life from the king's sisters.'" So Godard suffered his doom, and none pitied him.

Then Havelok gave his sceptre into Earl Ubbe's hand to rule Denmark on his behalf, and after that took ship and came to Grimsby, where he built a priory for black monks to pray evermore for the peace of Grim's soul. But when Earl Godrich understood that Havelok and his wife were come to England, he gathered together a great army to Lincoln on the 17th of March, and came to Grimsby to do battle with Havelok and his knights. It was a great battle, wherein more than a thousand knights were slain. The field was covered with pools of blood. Hugh Raven and his brothers, Robert and William, did valiantly and slew many earls; but terrible was Earl Godrich to the Danes, for his sword was swift and deadly as the levin fork. Havelok came to him and minding him of the oath he sware to Athelwold that Goldborough should be queen, bade him yield the land. But Godrich defied him, and running forward with his heavy sword cut Havelok's shield in two. Then Havelok smote him to the earth with a blow upon the helm; but Godrich arose and wounded him upon the shoulder, and Havelok, smarting with the cut, ran upon his enemy and hewed off his right hand. Then he took Earl Godrich and bound him and sent him to the queen. And when the English knew that Goldborough was the heir of Athelwold, they laid by their swords and came and asked pardon of the queen. And with one accord they took Earl Godrich and bound him to a stake and burned him to ashes, for the great outrage he had done.

Then all the English nobles came and sware fealty to

Havelok, and crowned him king in London. Of Grim's two daughters, Havelok wedded Gunild, the elder, to Earl Reyner of Chester; and Levive, the younger, fair as a new rose blossom opening to the sun, he married to Bertram, the cook, whom he made Earl of Cornwall in the room of Godrich.

Sixty years reigned Havelok and Goldborough in England, and they had fifteen children, who all became kings and queens. All the world spake of the great love that was betwixt them twain. Apart, neither knew joy or happiness. They grew never weary one of the other, for their love was ever new; and not a word of anger passed between them all their lives.

HEROES OF FRANCE

HOW RALPH THE CHARCOAL-BURNER ENTERTAINED KING CHARLES, AND AFTERWARDS WENT TO COURT

By Alfred J. Church

ON the feast of St. Thomas, which is four days before Yule, King Charles rode out of the city of Paris with a great company of princes and nobles. As they rode across the moor, a great tempest from the east fell upon them. So fierce was the wind and so heavy the rain, that they were scattered over the country; nor could they tell, the day being well-nigh as dark as night, whither they were going. Of what befell the rest of the company, there is no need to tell; this tale concerns King Charles only.

As he rode in sore plight, not knowing where he might find shelter, he was aware of a churl, who was leading a mare carrying two great panniers. "Now tell me your name," said the king. "They call me Ralph the Charcoal-burner," said the man. "I live in these parts, — my house is seven miles hence, — and I earn my bread with no little toil, selling coals to such as need them." "Friend," said the king, "I mean you no ill, for I judge you to be an honest man." "Judge as you will," answered Ralph, "I care not." "I am in sore need of a friend," said the king; "for both my horse and I are ready to perish, the storm is so fierce. Tell me

then where I can find shelter." "Shelter!" said Ralph, "I know of none, save in my own cottage, and that is far hence in the forest. But to that you are welcome, if you care to come with me."

The king was right glad to hear these words. "That is well," said he; "God reward you for your goodness." "Nay," answered the churl, "keep your thanks till they have been earned. As yet you have had from me nothing, neither fire, nor meat, nor dinner, nor resting-place. To-morrow when you go you can thank me, if you be so minded, with better reason. To praise first, and, maybe, to blame afterwards — that is contrary to sense." "So shall it be," said the king. So they went their way, talking as they went.

When they were come to the house, Ralph called with a loud voice to his wife, "Are you within, dame? Come out, open the door without delay. My guest and I are shivering with cold; such evil weather I have never seen." The good wife, when she heard her master's voice, made all haste to the door, knowing that he was a man of a hasty temper. "You are welcome home," said she to Ralph; and to the stranger, "You are welcome also." "Kindle a great fire," said Ralph, "and take two capons of the best, that we may have good cheer;" and he took the king by the hand, and would have him go before him into the house. But the king stood back by the door, and would have the charcoal-burner pass in before him. "That is but poor courtesy," said the man, and took him by the neck and pushed him in.

When they had warmed themselves awhile by the

fire, which was blazing in right royal fashion, Ralph cried to his wife, "Let us have supper, Gillian, as quickly as may be, and of the best, for we have had a toilsome day, and may well have a merry night. Never have I suffered worse weather or been so near to losing my way as when I met with this stranger here."

In no long time, when they had washed themselves, the supper was ready. "Now, friend," said Ralph, "take the dame by the hand, and lead her to the board." And when the king held back, he cried, "Now this is the second time," and smote him suddenly under the ear with his right hand, so strongly that he staggered half across the chamber, and fell to the ground. When the king rose, and indeed he could scarcely stand, "Now, Gillian," said Ralph, "take him by the hand and go to the table as I bid you." To his guest he said, "Now this is the second time that you have been lacking in courtesy, first by the door, and then at the table. Will you not do as you are bid? Am not I the master of my own house?" The king said to himself, "These are strange doings. Never have I been so dealt with in all my life." Nevertheless, for peace' sake he did as he was bid, and giving his hand to the dame, led her to the table. So they sat, the charcoal-burner on one side of the table, and the king and dame Gillian on the other. Right good cheer they had, fat capons, and bread, and wine of the best. Truly they wanted for nothing.

Said the churl to the king, "Sir, the foresters in this place threaten me much about the deer. They say that I am ever bringing down the fattest of the herd.

They will hale me, they say, to Paris, and bring me before the king, and make complaint against me. Say what they will, why should I not have enough for myself, ay, and to set before a guest? And now, my friend, spare not; there is enough and more." When they had well eaten, Ralph said to his wife, "Now, Gill, send round the cup. I will drink to my friend, and he shall drink to me." So the dame handed the cup, and the two drank to each other. Then, supper being ended, they sat by the fire, and the charcoal-burner told many merry tales. When it grew late, he said to the king, "Tell me now where you live." "I live at Court," said he, "where I have an office with the queen." "And what is your office?" "I am gentleman of the queen's bed-chamber." "And what is your name?" "My name is Wymond; Wymond of the Wardrobe they call me. And now, if you will come to Court, I can doubtless serve you, for I will see that you have a good sale for your fuel." Said Ralph, "I know not where the Court of which you speak may be." But Charles urged him, saying that the king and queen would be in Paris to spend Yuletide together, and that there would be much merry-making, and that without doubt he would sell his fuel to great advantage. "You seem to talk reason," said Ralph; "I will come. And now let us have another cup, and so to bed." So the collier and the dame led him to another chamber, where there was a bed handsomely furnished, and closed in with curtains. When they saw that he was well served and had all that he needed, they bade him good-night, and the king thanked them for their courtesy.

The next day as soon as it was light, the king rose from the bed and dressed himself without help, for, indeed, he had neither valet nor squire. Then his palfrey was brought to him, which when he had mounted, he called to Ralph, where he lay, for he would take his leave in friendly fashion, as was fitting in one that had had such good cheer. When the churl was roused, he said to the king, "Now tarry awhile till this evil weather be ended." "Nay," answered the king, "I must needs to my work and office; Yuletide is now at hand, and he that is found wanting will be greatly blamed. And now call thy good wife that I may pay her for the shelter and good cheer that I have had." "Nay," cried Ralph, "that shall never be; to think that I should take pay for sheltering one that is of the Court of King Charles!" "So be it," answered the king; "but at least if you will not take pay, come to the Court with a load of fuel as soon as may be; I warrant that if you will do so, you will make good profit of your goods." "That will I," answered Ralph. "I would fain see how coals sell at Court. And now tell me your name once more, lest I forget it."

Then the king rode away, nor had he traveled long when Roland and Oliver, with a thousand men after them, met him. They had come forth to search for him, and right glad were they to find him. So they turned their horses' heads and journeyed back to Paris. When they were near the town, Turpin the Archbishop came forth from the gates to meet them, with a great company of bishops and priests and others, giving thanks to God that their lord the king was come again to Paris. And when they had come to Paris, they went to the Church of

St. Denis, where there was service. And after service they went to the palace, and kept their Yule feast with much mirth and plenty of good things. For one-and-twenty days did they feast. Never had such a Yuletide been kept in the land of France.

The next day, Ralph, having thought much on what he had undertaken, loaded his mare, as he was wont to do, with two panniers full of coals, and made ready to start on his journey to the Court. "This is not of my counsel," said Gillian, his wife; "this journey will not be to your profit. Remember the shrewd blow that you dealt him. Keep from the Court, say I." "Nay, Gill," said the charcoal-burner, "I must have my way. I promised that I would go, and go I will, whether my going be for profit or for harm." So he loaded the panniers and went his way to the Court.

Meanwhile King Charles had not forgotten the matter. He called Roland to him, for, indeed, there was no man whom he trusted more, and said to him, "To-morrow morning take your horse and your harness, and watch well the road by which we went on the day that I was lost, and if you see any one coming this way, whatever his errand may be, bring him with you to this place, and take care that he sees no one before he sees me."

Roland wondered much what the king might mean, for it seemed a strange thing that on the very day of Yuletide, when a man should rest, he should be sent on such an errand. Nevertheless, he took his horse and his harness and rode forth early in the morning, and watched the roads as he had been commanded. For a long time he saw nothing either far or near; but a little past mid-

day he saw the charcoal-burner come driving his mare before him, with two panniers filled with coals. The sight pleased him well; so he rode up to him with all the speed that he could. The man saluted him courteously, and Roland, in his turn, also saluted him. Their greetings ended, he said to the man, "Come now to the king; let nothing hinder you." "Nay," said Ralph, "I am not so foolish. This is a jest, Sir Knight, and it is ill courtesy for a knight to jest with a common man. There be many men better than I that come and go to Paris, and the king has no thought of them, whether it be morning or night. If you are in mind to trick me, I can hold my own, for all that I am ill-clad." "This is but foolishness," said Roland, "the king has straightly commanded that you should be brought to him." "Nay," answered Ralph, "I am on my way, according to promise made to one Wymond, and to him I will go and to none other." "Have done with your Wymond," cried Roland; "I must take you to the king as the king has commanded."

So they wrangled a long time, and still the churl was firmly set that he would go to Wymond and to none other. "And where dwells this Wymond of yours?" said Roland. "He dwells with the queen at Paris, if his tale be true." "If that be so," answered Roland, "seeing that I know well the queen and her ladies, and you are on your way to them, I will trust to your going. Only you must give me a pledge that this is truly your purpose." "Nay," said the charcoal-burner, "I will pledge you no pledge. And as for you, get you out of my way, or it will be the worse for you."

Roland said to himself, "Now this is but folly to dis-

pute any longer with this fellow." And he took his leave of the man full pleasantly. But Ralph liked not such ways; for he thought that this knight that was so gayly clad had him in scorn. "Come hither, Sir Knight, to-morrow when we can be alone together, you and I; surely you shall see how I will deal with you."

Then Roland rode back to the king. By this time mass was ended, and the king had put on his robes. "You are well come, Sir Roland," said he; "have you done my errand?" "Sire," answered Sir Roland, "I went as you gave me commandment, and watched the ways, but saw no man, but one only." "And who was this one?" asked the king. "He," said Roland, "was but a churl that had with him two panniers of coal." "Why did you not bring this said churl to me, as I bid you? It may be you durst not."

Roland saw that the king was wroth, and was not a little glad to go forth from his presence. Going forth he met a porter, "Whither go you, lazy loon?" said he. Said the porter, "There is one at the gate, a churl that has a mare and two panniers of coals, and he clamors to be let in at the gate." "Whom does he want?" said Roland. The porter answered, "He asks for one Wymond." Then Roland said, "Go back to your place, porter, and open the gate and bid him enter. But say that it does not lie within your office to go to this Wymond, but that he must himself seek him."

So the porter went back to the gate and opened it, saying to the charcoal-burner, "Enter, man; but I have no leisure to seek for this Wymond for whom you ask. You must seek him yourself." Said Ralph, "If you will

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not seek the man, I must needs do it myself; see you then that no harm come to the mare and the coals, and I will look for Wymond, for certainly it was he that bade me come hither."

So the charcoal-burner went his way through the palace asking for Wymond. There was not one that knew the man, or had so much as heard the name. They seemed to Ralph to lack courtesy; nevertheless he would not cease from his quest, nor was there any one of whom he failed to inquire. After he had passed through many chambers, he came to one that was more splendid than all that he had seen before. It was a great hall finely painted and hung about with tapestries, and there the king sat at dinner in great state. On the table were many dainties, and there was a store of dishes both silver and gold, and many other adornments. "Here is royalty enough," cried Ralph. "If I could only have speech with Wymond, I would away, for this methinks is no place for a simple man." And still he went on. Many sought to put him back, for he seemed to press on in an unmannerly fashion; but he was a stalwart man that gave as much as he took.

At last, after not a little trouble, he came near to the king, where he sat in state at the table. "See," he cried, "that is Wymond, yonder, the man whom I seek. Well do I know him, though, indeed, he is otherwise clad than when I last saw him. Now he is in cloth of gold. Truly he must be some greater man than he said. Alas, that I have been wiled hither. Truly this man has beguiled me." When the king heard this he laughed.

Ralph looked about on the company that sat with the

king, for many worshipful men were there. But when he saw the queen, then he was greatly troubled. "Lady," he said, "I am sorely troubled to see your fine attire, so splendid is it. Now if I can but escape hence this day, nothing in the whole world shall bring me hither again."

And now, dinner being over, the king rose from the table; and he told before the whole company how he had fared with the charcoal-burner. The churl quaked as he heard the tale. And he said, "Would I were on the moor again this very hour, and the king alone, or any one of his knights, be he the bravest and strongest of them all."

Then the lords laughed aloud. Some, however, were angry, and would have had the man hanged. "What is this churl," said they, "that he should so misuse the king?" But Charles would have none of such doings. "He is a stalwart man, and can strike a hard blow. Heaven forbid that I should harm him. Rather will I make him a knight." So he dubbed Ralph the Charcoal-burner a knight, and gave him a revenue of £300 by the year; and "the next fee in France that shall come into my hands, that," said he, "will I give you. But now you must win your spurs." So the king gave him his armor and arms, and sixty squires of good degree to be his company. And Ralph was in after time a very perfect, noble knight, and did good service to the king.

HOW FIERABRAS DEFIED KING CHARLES

By Alfred J. Church

BALAN, who was admiral of the Moors in Spain, had a son, Fierabras by name, who was the most marvelous giant that ever was born of woman. There was no man that could be matched with him for height, and bigness of limb, and strength of body. This Fierabras was king of Alexandria, and ruled the whole land of Babylon from the Red Sea eastwards. Russia also he possessed, and Cologne; he was lord, moreover, of Jerusalem, and had possession of the Sepulchre of our Lord. It happened on a certain day that this man came riding furiously to the camp where King Charles lay with his army, and asked that some one should come forth and fight with him. No man answering him or coming forth, he fell into a great rage and sware by his god Mahomet that he would not depart from the place till he should have done battle with some Christian man; but still no one came forth to him. Then he cried with a very loud and terrible voice, "King of Paris, send out to me your strongest and bravest knight, be he Roland, or Oliver, or Thierry, or Ogier the Dane, that he may fight with me. Nay, and if you will send out against me six or seven of your strongest knights, I swear by my god Mahomet that I will not refuse to fight with them all. But if you will not send

out any man, then I will assuredly assail your camp before nightfall this very day, and strike off your head, and lead away Roland and Oliver as prisoners. You have come into this my land without cause, and verily you shall depart without honor."

When he had thus spoken he lay down under a tree, and having tied his horse to one of the boughs, took off his armor. This done, he cried to the king, "Send now Roland or Oliver to fight with me. And if these dare not come alone, then let two others come together with them; and if the four be afraid, let six come. Ten kings have I slain already in single combat; there was not one of them, for all that they were mighty men of valor, that could stand against me."

When King Charles heard these threatenings and challenges, he said to Richard of Normandy, "Who is this knight that speaks so boldly?"

Duke Richard answered, "This, my lord king, is the strongest of all men born of women, and he is persuaded that there is no king in the whole world that is a match for him."

"For all that," said the king, "I will find one of my knights that shall encounter him. But tell me his name."

"His name," answered Duke Richard, "is Fierabras. He is an infidel, and has done much harm to Christian men. For he slew our lord the Pope, and hanged many holy men and women, and to this day he holds possession of the holy Sepulchre of our Lord."

"I am the more firmly resolved," said the king, "hearing what you say, that one of my knights shall meet him."

Thereupon he turned to Roland and said, "I pray you, dear nephew, go forth and meet this Turk in battle."

But Roland answered him, "Not so, fair uncle; why should I do your bidding in this matter? Do you bear in mind what happened but yesterday, when we were so near to being taken by the heathen, how they fell upon us with fifty thousand men, and how we the younger knights bore the burden and brunt of the day and suffered many grievous wounds, so that Oliver my comrade was brought near to death, and indeed, but for your help, we had all perished? And do you remember further how last night, when we were resting in our tents, you, being full of wine, declared stoutly that your old knights would have borne themselves better than we of the younger sort had done? Now it shall be seen how these said old knights shall stand up against this heathen man, for indeed of the younger no one will go forth against him."

When the king heard this, he smote Roland his nephew in the face with his gauntlet so sharply that the blood gushed out abundantly. Thereupon Roland drew his sword and would have smitten his uncle had he not been held by the bystanders. And the king cried, "Now, this is a most monstrous thing for any man, much more a kinsman. Seize him, for he shall die the death for this wickedness." But when the courtiers made as if to lay hands upon him, Roland cried, "Now, if any man touch me, I will cleave his head in two." Nor did any man dare to come near him. But Ogier the Dane said, "Now, Roland, you did ill to threaten your uncle, whom you are bound to honor above all men." "It is true," answered

Roland. "I was greatly provoked; nevertheless I repent of my deed."

The king said to the Peers of France, "I am much troubled in this matter. First, Roland my nephew, that should have been zealous to help me, threatens to slay me, and then there is no man that is willing to do battle with this pagan."

"Take courage, my lord king," said the Duke Naymes, "some one will be found to do you this service." But the king refused to be comforted.

Now Oliver lay sick in bed, for he had been sorely wounded in battle. But when he heard how the king and Roland had fallen out, and how Fierabras had defied the king and his army, and no man had gone forth to meet him, he straightway rose from his bed and began to stretch and try himself to see whether by any means he could bear his armor. In so doing he made his wounds bleed afresh. But when he had bound them again as best he could, he said to Garin his squire, "Come, bring me my arms, for I will go out and meet this pagan." Said Garin the squire, "Now, my lord Oliver, have pity on yourself. You will compass your own death." Oliver answered, "Do my bidding, for this is an occasion of honor that no man should miss." So Oliver put on his armor, Garin helping him. This done, he took his sword, Hautclere by name, which he loved above all things. Then they brought him Ferraunt, his horse, ready saddled and bridled. And Oliver leapt lightly into the saddle without so much as touching it, and put his shield into place, and took a spear very long and sharply pointed. Then he struck his horse with his spurs,

and Ferraunt leapt up under him. It was a noble sight to see, so gallant was the knight and so brave the steed.

Oliver rode up to the king's tent and saluted him, saying, "My lord, I have served you faithfully for these three years past without reward or wages. I pray you, therefore, that you give me this day the thing I shall desire of you." The king answered, "Most noble earl, I will do this with a good will. There is not in this land of France a city or town or castle that I will not give you at your desire." But Oliver said, "My lord king, I ask neither towns nor castles, but only this — that you suffer me to do battle with this pagan."

When the other knights heard this, they were not a little shamed that a wounded man should take up the challenge, while they themselves held back. "What is this," they said, "that Oliver, who was hurt well-nigh to death, would now go forth to battle!" As for the king, he said, "Now, Oliver, you have surely lost your wits. You know that you have been sorely wounded, and yet you will run into a worse danger. Go back to your bed and rest; assuredly I will not suffer you to do battle with this pagan."

Then Ganelon, who was afterwards the traitor, rose up in his place and said, "Sir, this is against the custom of France that you should deny Oliver his request." The king was very angry, and said, "Ganelon, you are not well disposed in this matter. If this be as you say, then Oliver shall fight with this pagan, and if he fight, then he can hardly escape death. But mark you this: I swear by my faith that if he be slain or taken in this battle, then not all the gold in the world can save you

from a shameful death; ay, and all your house shall perish with you."

"Sir king," said Ganelon, "may God and Our Lady keep me!" but to himself he said secretly, "Now God forbid that Oliver should come back safe. Rather may this pagan smite off his head!" But when King Charles saw that he could not hinder Oliver from doing battle with Fierabras, he said, "Now may God be with you and help you, and bring you back with joy!" and he reached to him his glove, which Oliver took with much pleasantness and humility.

But Reyner, that was father to Oliver, when he saw his son ready to go forth, came to the king, and knelt down at his feet, and cried in sore trouble, "Now, my lord king, have pity on my son and me. He is young and presumptuous, full of pride and ambition, but so sorely wounded that he cannot fight; forbid him, therefore, to go forth." But the king said to Reyner, "What I have given I may not withdraw." Then Oliver stood up and spake with a loud voice, "Sir king and all you lords of France, if I have offended any man in word or deed, I pray him to forgive me." There was not a man but wept to hear these words. The king himself wept, and commended him to the keeping of God.

Oliver rode forth and came to the tree where Fierabras lay at ease and unarmed. The giant did not so much as look at him, but turned away his head, for he despised Oliver as being but little of stature in comparison with himself. Oliver said to him, "Awake, you have called me many times this day; lo! now I have come. And first tell me your name." Fierabras answered him, "I am

Fierabras of Alexandria. It was I that destroyed the city of Rome and slew the Pope, and carried away the holy things. And Jerusalem is mine, and the place where, as you say, your God is buried."

Oliver said, "If these things are true, it is time that you should suffer due punishment for your misdeeds. But enough of talking. Make ready and arm yourself, or else, by the God in whom I believe, I will smite you where you lie!" When Fierabras heard him speak so fiercely, he began to laugh, and said, "You are a bold talker, but first tell me who you are, and of what rank." Oliver answered, "Before night come, pagan, you shall know full well who I am. But now hear this: my lord the king has sent this message by my mouth: 'Renounce Mahomet your god, and all other idols, and believe in the true God that made heaven and earth and all that is therein.' Meanwhile, take your choice of two things: either depart out of this country, taking nothing with you, or stand forth and fight with me."

Fierabras said, "Fellow, you are not able to meet me, even were I without arms. But tell me now thy name and lineage." Oliver answered, "My name is Garin, and I am a poor knight; King Charles has sent me to do battle with you; make ready, therefore, for battle." But Fierabras would not consent. "Now tell me, Sir Garin," said he, "why Roland, or Oliver, or Ogier the Dane, who are all, men say, of high renown, have not come out against me." "They have not come," answered Oliver, "because they think too meanly of you."

This he said with such vehemence that his wounds opened again. When Fierabras saw the blood he said,

"Are you perchance wounded, Sir Garin?" "Not I," answered Oliver; "this blood that you see comes from my horse where I spurred him." But Fierabras saw that the blood was not from the horse, and said: "You speak no truth when you say that you are not hurt. This is no horse's blood, but of your own body that I see. Now drink of this flagon of balm that I took from the city of Jerusalem. When you have drunken you shall be whole in body, and then you shall be fit to defend yourself in battle." But Oliver would have none of it. "This," said he, "is but folly."

Fierabras, seeing that he must needs fight, said to Oliver, "Come now, help me to arm myself." Said Oliver, "Can I trust you?" "Yea," answered Fierabras, "that can you: never have I been traitor to any man, nor ever will." So Oliver armed him; he helped him to don first a suit of leather of Arabia, and after this a coat and habergeon of steel, and an helmet richly garnished with jewels for his head. Was ever such courtesy in this world, Oliver helping this pagan to arm, whom, being unarmed, he might full easily have slain, and the pagan having pity upon Oliver as not being his match in fighting, and all the more when he saw that he had been wounded? Would that there were more of such courtesy between Christian men!

When he was armed, Fierabras took the three swords that he had, Pleasance and Baptism and Grabon, all being of so fine a temper that there was no armor made but they could break through it. The three were made by one of three brothers; another of these three made three more, of which Durendal, the sword of Roland,

was the most famous; and yet another brother also made three, of which it suffices to name Hautclere that was the sword of Oliver, and Joyous that was one of the chief treasures of King Charles. On his shield he had the image of his god, Apollyon to wit, to whom when he had commended himself, he yet once again besought Oliver to depart. And when Oliver had again refused, saying that he trusted to prevail by the help of his God, Fierabras said to him, "Now as you are a Christian man, I adjure you by the font wherein you were baptized and by the cross to which your God was nailed, to tell me truly your name and lineage."

Oliver answered, "You could not have adjured me by greater things than this same font and cross; know therefore that I am Oliver, the son of Reyner, close comrade of Roland, and one of the Twelve Peers of France."

Then said Fierabras, "I knew that you were no poor and unknown knight, but a great warrior and a famous, so great was your courage. But you are wounded, and it would be dishonor to me should I overcome you by means of your weakness." But Oliver answered him fiercely, "Enough of these idle words; when we come to fight together you shall see that I am no dead man. Nevertheless, as you are a courteous knight, I will require you once again to forsake Mahomet and your false gods, and submit yourself to be baptized. So shall you have Roland and King Charles for your friends." "Nay," said Fierabras, "but this is folly. Let us address ourselves to battle without more delay."

Then did these two champions lay their spears in rest and make ready to charge. When the men of France

saw this, they were in great fear lest some mischance should befall Oliver; as for the king, he hid his face in his mantle, and kneeling before the crucifix embraced it, weeping the while, and crying, "O Lord, I beseech Thee keep Oliver and suffer not the Christian faith to be dishonored by his downfall." Meanwhile the two warriors met in the shock of battle, and that so fiercely that the sparks flew from their spearheads when they smote on the shields, and that the shafts of both were broken. The reins dropped from their hands, and they were both so astonied that they scarce knew where they were. But then coming to themselves, they drew each man his sword. And first Oliver with Hautclere smote Fierabras so fiercely on the helmet that he shore off a great portion of it, and the jewels wherewith it was garnished fell to the ground. Nor was the force of the blow yet spent: it reached the giant's shoulder, but the cuirass which was of stout leather of Cappadocia, stayed it; nevertheless the giant's feet were thrust out of the stirrups, and he came very near to being overthrown. And all the men of France cried with one voice, "Blessed Mary, what a mighty stroke has Oliver dealt to this pagan!" "'Tis true," said Roland, "would I were with him this day!" Then Fierabras, in his turn, smote Oliver with his sword Pleasance on the helmet. From the helmet it glanced down and grievously wounded the Christian's horse. Then Oliver was not a little dismayed, and commended himself to God and the Virgin. Which, when Fierabras heard, he said, "I am ill content to have so hurt you. Hardly shall you see the sun set this day, for already you grow faint. But this has befallen you because you are

already wounded. Be wise therefore, and leave the battle while there is yet time." But Oliver would have none of such counsel. Therefore they fell to fighting again, and this so fiercely that the armor of the two of them was well-nigh broken to pieces.

When the king saw this, and perceived that Oliver was in no little danger, he was greatly troubled. He prayed aloud, saying, "O Lord God, now keep the valiant Oliver, that he be not slain or taken. Verily, if aught happen to him, I swear by my father's soul that I will burn every monastery and church and altar in the land." But the Duke Naymes rebuked the king, saying, "Speak not thus, Sir King. Rather pray to God that of His goodness He will help Oliver." And the king said, "You are right; I spake foolishly."

Meanwhile the two champions continued to fight fiercely, more fiercely than befitted prudent or experienced warriors. Oliver especially was so carried out of himself that his hand grew numb with the frequency of his blows, and at last his sword flew out of his hand. Straightway he ran to regain it, putting his shield over his head to cover himself from the enemy's blows. But this did not avail him, for Fierabras smote twice on the shield, and so mightily that he brake it into pieces, and the breastplate under it also. And Oliver durst not go forward to take up his sword, for he feared greatly what the giant might do to him. When the men of France saw in what straits he was, they made as if they would arm themselves and go to his help. But this King Charles would not suffer. "Not so," said he; "God can save him and maintain him in the right, and He will do so."

Then the others abode in their place. But now Fierabras began to jeer and scoff at Oliver, "Now I know that you are vanquished, for you dare not put out your hand to take your sword for fear of me; no, you would not stoop to the ground to gain the wealth of the whole world. Now hearken to me: if you will deny your faith and declare that your God is no god, and believe in Mahomet, then I will give you my sister Floripas in marriage, than whom there is no fairer maid upon earth, and we two will conquer France or ever this year shall have passed, and I will make you king of one half of this realm." Oliver answered, "Now God forbid that I should listen to such folly. These your gods are no gods at all, and have no goodness or strength." Fierabras said, "I see that you are firmly set in your mind not to do these things. Now there was never man on earth who has given me such trouble of mind as have you. But now take up your sword; for without it you can have no more strength in battle than a woman." "That will I not do," answered Oliver. "I will not take my sword by your courtesy. My life and death are with God; and I will win my sword by fair fight or not at all."

Thereupon Fierabras came against Oliver, having his sword Pleasance in his hand. Then was Oliver in a great strait; for he had no sword, and his shield was cleft in twain, and his armor grievously broken. But God had mercy upon him, and put it in his head to look about him. And looking he saw the horse of Fierabras, and on the saddle two swords, Baptism and Grabon. Whereupon he made haste and laid hold on the sword Baptism. And when he had possessed himself of it, he said, "King

of Alexandria, now the time of reckoning has come. See, I have one of your swords; you must take good care lest it be your destruction." When Fierabras saw what Oliver had done, he changed color and said, "O Baptism, my good sword, what is this? Never did better weapon hang by my side or by the side of any man living upon earth." Then he said to Oliver, "You are, I well know, an honorable knight. Come, now, take your own sword and give to me that which is mine." "Not so," answered Oliver; "I will make no agreement with you, save this: that I will do my best to slay you, and you shall do the same with me."

And when he had said this, Oliver ran at Fierabras as fiercely as a lion that leaps upon its prey. Nor was Fierabras slow to meet him. Indeed, he smote him so stoutly that he brake through his helmet, wounding the knight's head. Seeing this, he cried, "Now you are wounded, Sir Oliver. Never more shall you see King Charles or Roland; so shall I at last have my desire." But Oliver answered, "Be not so proud nor boast overmuch. I have a good confidence that I shall either slay you or conquer you." Then he made a feint to strike the pagan on the head; and Fierabras, raising his shield over high to cover himself from the blow, left his side unguarded, which Oliver, quickly perceiving, drove his sword with all his might into the pagan's side. And the man fell with the blow, so mighty was it, for Oliver dealt it with all his strength that so he might put an end to the fight.

THE BATTLE AT RONCEVALS

By Isabel Butler

THEN Oliver goes up into a high mountain, and looks away to the right, all down a grassy valley, and sees the host of the heathen coming on, and he called to Roland, his comrade, saying: "From the side of Spain I see a great light coming, thousands of white hauberks and thousands of gleaming helms. They will fall upon our Franks with great wrath. Ganelon the felon has done this treason, and he it was adjudged us to the rear-guard, before the Emperor." "Peace, Oliver," saith Count Roland, "he is my mother's husband; speak thou no ill of him."

The coming up of the host.

Oliver has fared up the mountain, and from the summit thereof he sees all the kingdom of Spain and the great host of the Saracens. Wondrous is the shine of helmets studded with gold, of shields and broidered hauberks, of lances and gonfanons. The battles are without number, and no man may give count thereof, so great is the multitude. Oliver was all astonied at the sight; he got him down the hill as best he might, and came to the Franks, and gave them his tidings.

"I have seen the paynims," said Oliver; "never was so great a multitude seen of living men. Those of the vanguard are upon a hundred thousand, all armed with shields and helmets, and clad in white hauberks; right

straight are the shafts of their lances, and bright the points thereof. Such a battle we shall have as was never before seen of man. Ye lords of France, may God give you might! and stand ye firm that we be not overcome." "Foul fall him who flees!" then say the Franks, "for no peril of death will we fail thee."

"Great is the host of the heathen," saith Oliver, "and few is our fellowship. Roland, fair comrade, I pray thee sound thy horn of ivory, that Charles may hear it and return again with all his host." "That were but folly," quoth Roland, "and thereby would I lose all fame in sweet France. Rather will I strike good blows and great with Durendal, that the blade thereof shall be blooded even unto the hilt. Woe worth the paynims that they came into the passes! I pledge thee my faith short life shall be theirs."

Oliver prays Roland to sound his horn.

"Roland, comrade, blow now thy horn of ivory, and Charles shall hear it, and bring hither his army again, and the king and his barons shall succor us." But Roland answers him, saying: "Now God forfend that through me my kinsman be brought to shame, or aught of dishonor befall fair France. But first I will lay on with Durendal, the good sword that is girded here at my side, and thou shalt see the blade thereof all reddened. Woe worth the paynims when they gathered their hosts! I pledge me they shall all be given over to death."

"Roland, comrade, blow thy horn of ivory, that Charles may hear it as he passes the mountains, and I pledge me the Franks will return hither again." But Roland saith: "Now God forfend it be said of any living man that I sounded my horn

The pride of Roland.

for dread of paynims. Nay, that reproach shall never fall upon my kindred. But when I am in the stour I will smite seven hundred blows, or mayhap a thousand, and thou shalt see the blade of Durendal all crimson. The Franks are goodly men, and they will lay on right valiantly, nor shall those of Spain have any surety from death."

Saith Oliver, "I see no shame herein. I have seen the Saracens of Spain; they cover the hills and the valleys, the heaths and the plains. Great are the hosts of this hostile folk, and ours is but a little fellowship." And Roland makes answer: "My desire is the greater thereby. May God and His most holy angels forfend that France should lose aught of worship through me. Liefer had I die than bring dishonor upon me. The emperor loves us for dealing stout blows."

Roland is brave, and Oliver is wise, and both are good men of their hands; once armed and a-horseback, rather would they die than flee the battle. Hardy are the counts and high their speech. The felon paynims ride on in great wrath. Saith Oliver: "Roland, prithee look. They are close upon us, but Charles is afar off. Thou wouldst not deign to sound thy horn of ivory; but were the king here we should suffer no hurt. Look up towards the passes of Aspre and thou shalt see the woeful rear-guard; they who are of it will do no more service henceforth." But Roland answers him: "Speak not so cowardly. Cursed be the heart that turns coward in the breast! Hold we the field, and ours be the buffets and the slaughter."

When Roland sees that the battle is close upon them,

he waxes fiercer than lion or leopard. He calls to the Franks, and he saith to Oliver: "Comrade, friend, say not so. When the emperor left us his Franks, he set apart such a twenty thousand of men that, certes, among them is no coward. For his liege lord a man ought to suffer all hardship, and endure great heat and great cold, and give both his blood and his body. Lay on with thy lance, and I will smite with Durendal, my good sword that the king gave me. If I die here, may he to whom it shall fall, say, 'This was the sword of goodly vassal.'"

Roland is fain for battle.

Nigh at hand is Archbishop Turpin; he now spurs his horse to the crest of a knoll, and speaks to the Franks, and this is his sermon: "Lords, barons, Charles left us here, and it is a man's devoir to die for his king. Now help ye to uphold Christianity. Certes, ye shall have a battle, for here before you are the Saracens. Confess your sins and pray God's mercy, and that your souls may be saved I will absolve you. If ye are slain ye will be holy martyrs, and ye shall have seats in the higher Paradise." The Franks light off their horses and kneel down, and the archbishop blesses them, and for a penance bids them that they lay on with their swords.

The archbishop's sermon.

The Franks get upon their feet, freed and absolved from sin; and the archbishop blesses them in the name of God. Then they mounted their swift horses, and armed themselves after the manner of knights, and made them ready for battle. Count Roland calls to Oliver, saying: "Sir comrade, rightly thou saidst Ganelon hath betrayed us all, and hath received gold and silver and

goods therefor; but the emperor will well revenge us. King Marsila hath bought and sold us, but he shall pay for it with the sword."

Roland rides through the passes of Spain on Veillantif, his good horse and swift. He is clad in his harness; right well it becomes him, and as he rides he brandishes his spear, turning its point towards heaven; and to its top is bound a gonfanon of pure white, whereof the golden fringes fall down even unto his hands. Well fashioned is his body, and his face fair and laughing; close behind him rides his comrade; and all the Franks claim him as their champion. Full haughtily he looks on the Saracens, but gently and mildly on the Franks, and he speaks to them courteously, saying: "Lords, barons, ride on softly. The paynims come seeking destruction, and this day we shall have plunder so goodly and great that no king of France hath ever taken any of so great price." At these words the two hosts come together.

Franks and paynims join battle.

Saith Oliver: "I have no mind for more words. Thou wouldst not deign to sound thy horn of ivory, and no help shalt thou get from Charles; naught he knows of our case, nor is the wrong his, the baron. They who are beyond the mountains are no wise to blame. Now ride on with what might ye may. Lords, barons, hold ye the field! And in God's name I pray you bethink you both how to deal good blows and how to take them. And let us not forget the device of our king." At these words all the Franks cried out together, and whosoever may have heard that cry of Montjoy must call to mind valor and worth. Then they rode forward, God! how proudly, spurring their horses

for the more speed, and fell a-smiting — how else should they do? But no whit adread were the Saracens. And lo you, Franks and paynims come together in battle.

The nephew of Marsila, who was called Ælroth, rides before all his host, and foul are his words to our Franks: "Ye Frankish felons, to-day ye shall do battle with us. He who should have been your surety has betrayed you; mad is the king who left you behind in the passes. To-day shall fair France lose her fame, and the right arm of Charles shall be smitten off from his body." When Roland hears this, God! how great is his wrath. He spurs as fast as his horse may run, and with all the might he hath he smites Ælroth, and breaks his shield, and rends apart his hauberk, that he cleaves his breast and breaks the bone, and severs the spine from the back; with his lance he drives out the soul from the body, for so fierce is the blow Ælroth wavers, and with all the force of his lance Roland hurls him from his horse dead, his neck broken in two parts. Yet Roland still chides him, saying, "Out, coward! Charles is not mad, nor loves he treason. He did well and knightly to leave us in the passes. To-day shall France lose naught of her fame. Franks, lay on! Ours is the first blow. Right is with us, and these swine are in the wrong."

The Franks win the first blow.

Among the paynims is a duke, Falsaron by name, who was brother to King Marsila, and held the land of Dathan and Abiram; there is no more shameless felon on all the earth; so wide is his forehead that the space between his eyes measures a full half foot. When he sees his nephew slain, he is full of dole, and he drives through

the press as swift as he may, and cries aloud the paynim war cry. Great is his hatred of the Franks. "To-day shall fair France lose her fame!" Oliver hears him and is passing wroth; with his golden spurs he pricks on his horse and rides upon him like a true baron; he breaks the shield, tears asunder the hauberk, and drives his lance into the body up to the flaps of his pennon, and with the might of his blow hurls him dead from the saddle. He looks to earth where lies the felon, and speaks him haughtily: "Coward, naught care I for thy threats. Lay on, Franks; certes, we shall overcome them." And he cries out Montjoy, the war cry of Charles.

A king there is, Corsablis by name; he is of Barbary, a far-off land, and he spoke to the Saracens, saying: "We shall win a fair day on these Franks, for few is their fellowship. And such as be here shall prove themselves of small avail, nor shall one be saved alive for Charles; the day has come whereon they must die." Archbishop Turpin hears him right well, and to no man under heaven has he ever borne such hate; with his spurs of fine gold he pricks on his horse, and rides upon the king with great might, cleaves his shield and rends his hauberk, and thrusts his great lance into his body, and so drives home the blow that sorely the king wavers, and with all the force of his lance Turpin hurls him dead into the path. He looks on the ground where he sees the glutton lie, nor doth he withhold him from speech, but saith: "Coward and heathen, thou hast lied! Charles, my liege lord, is ever our surety, and our Franks have no mind to flee; and we shall have a care that thy comrades go

The slaying of the paynim peers.

not far hence; yea, and a second death must ye suffer. Lay on, ye Franks, let no man forget himself! This first blow is ours, thanks be to God." And he cries out Montjoy, to hold the field.

And Gerin smites Malprimis de Brigal, that his good shield no whit avails him; he shatters the jeweled boss thereof, and half of it falls to earth; he pierces the hauberk to the flesh, and drives his good lance into the body; the paynim falls down in a heap, and his soul is carried away by Satan.

And Gerier, the comrade of Gerin, smites the Emir, and shatters his shield and unmails his hauberk, and thrusts his good lance into his heart; so great is the blow his lance drives through the body, and with all the force of his shaft he throws him to the ground dead. "Ours is a goodly battle," quoth Oliver.

Samson the duke rides upon the Almaçur, and breaks his shield all flowered and set with gold; nor doth his good hauberk give him any surety, but Samson pierces him through heart and liver and lungs, and fells him dead, whether any one grieves for him or no. Saith the archbishop: "That was knightly stricken."

And Anseïs urges on his horse and encounters with Turgis of Tortosa, cleaves his shield below the golden boss, rends asunder his twofold hauberk, and sets the point of his good lance in his body, and thrusts so well that the iron passes sheer through him, that the might of the blow hurls him to the ground dead. "That was the buffet of a man of good prowess," saith Roland.

And Engelier, the Gascon of Bordeaux, spurs his horse, slackens his rein, and encounters with Escremis

of Valtierra, breaks and carves the shield from his shoulder, rends apart the ventail of his hauberk, and smites him in his breast between his two collar bones, and with the might of the blow hurls him from the saddle, saying: "Ye are all given over to destruction."

And Oton smites the paynim Esturgant upon the leathern front of his shield, marring all the blue and white thereof, breaks through the sides of his hauberk, and drives his good spear and sharp into his body, and casts him from his swift horse, dead. "Naught may save thee," saith Oliver thereat.

And Berengier rides on Estramaris, shatters his shield, rends asunder his hauberk, and drives his stout lance into his body, and smites him dead amid a thousand Saracens. Of the Twelve Peers ten are now slain, and but two are still living men, to wit, Chernuble and Count Margaris.

Margaris is a right valiant knight, strong and goodly, swift and keen; he spurs his horse and rides on Oliver, breaks his shield below the boss of pure gold, that the lance passed along his side, but by God's help, it did not pierce the body; the shaft grazes him but doth not overthrow him; and Margaris drives on, in that he has no hindrance, and sounds his horn to call his men about him.

Now the battle waxes passing great on both parties. Count Roland spares himself no whit, but smites with his lance as long as the shaft holds, but by fifteen blows it is broken and lost; thereupon he draws out Durendal his good sword, all naked, spurs his horse and rides on Chernuble, breaks his helm whereon the carbuncles

blaze, cleaves his mail-coif and the hair of his head that the sword cuts through eyes and face, and the white hauberk of fine mail, and all the body to the fork of the legs, sheer into the saddle of beaten gold, nor did the sword stint till it had entered the horse and cleft the backbone, never staying for joint, that man and horse fell dead upon the thick grass. Thereupon Roland cried: "Coward, woe worth the day thou camest hither! no help shalt thou get from Mahound; nor by such swine as thou shall to-day's battle be achieved."

Count Roland rides through the press; in his hand he hath Durendal, right good for hacking and hewing, and doth great damage upon the Saracens. Lo, how he hurls one dead upon another, and the bright blood flows out on the field. All reddened are his hauberk and his arms, and the neck and shoulders of his good horse. Nor doth Oliver hold back from the battle; the Twelve Peers do not shame themselves, and all the Franks smite and slay, that the paynims perish or fall swooning. Then saith the archbishop, "Our barons do passing well," and he cries out Montjoy, the war cry of Charles.

The Franks do passing well.

Oliver drives through the stour; his lance is broken, and naught is left him but the truncheon; yet he smites the paynim Malsaron that his shield patterned with gold and flowers is broken, and his two eyes fly out from his head, and his brains fall at his feet; among seven hundred of his fellows Oliver smites him dead. Then he slew Turgin and Esturgus, and thereby broke his lance that it splintered even unto the pommel. Thereat Roland saith: "Comrade, what dost thou? I have no mind for a

staff in so great battle, rather a man hath need of iron and steel. Where is thy sword Halteclere?" "I may no' draw it," Oliver answered him. "So keen am I to smite."

But now the lord Oliver hath drawn his good sword, even as his comrade had besought him, and hath shown it to him in knightly wise; and therewith he smites the paynim Justin de Val Ferrée that he severs his head in twain, cuts through his broidered hauberk and his body, through his good saddle set with gold, and severs the backbone of his steed, that man and horse fall dead on the field before him. Then said Roland: "Now I hold you as my brother, and 't is for such buffets the emperor loves us." And on all sides they cry out Montjoy.

Count Gerin rides his horse Sorel, and Gerier, his comrade, rides Passecerf; both slacken rein, and spurring mightly set upon the paynim Timosel; one smites him on the shield, and the other on the hauberk, that both their lances break in his body; and he falls dead in the field. I wot not, nor have I ever heard man say, which of the twain was the more swift. Then Esperveris, son of Borel, died at the hand of Engelier of Bordeaux. And the archbishop slew Siglorel, that enchanter who of old had passed down into hell, led thither by the spells of Jupiter. "Of him we are well rid," quoth Turpin. And Roland answered him: "Yea, the coward is overthrown. Oliver, my brother, such buffets please me right well."

Meantime the battle waxes passing hard, and both Franks and paynims deal such blows that it is wonder to see; here they smite, and there make what defense they may; and many a lance is broken and reddened, and

there is great rending of pennons and ensigns. Many a good Frank loses his youth, and will never again see wife or mother, or the men of France who await him in the passes. Charles the Great weeps for them, and makes great sorrow; but what avails it? no help shall they get therefrom. An ill turn Ganelon did them the day he sold his own kindred in Saragossa. Thereafter he lost both life and limb therefor; in the council at Aix, he was condemned to hang, and with him upon thirty of his kindred to whom death left no hope.

The battle waxes hard.

Dread and sore is the battle. Roland and Oliver lay on valiantly, and the archbishop deals more than a thousand buffets, nor are the Twelve Peers backward, and all the Franks smite as a man. The paynims are slain by hundreds and thousands; whosoever does not flee has no surety from death, but will he, nill he, must take his end. But the Franks lose their goodliest arms; lances adorned with gold, and trenchant spears, and gonfanons red and white and blue, and the blades of their good swords are broken, and thereto they lose many a valiant knight. Never again shall they see father or kindred, or Charles their liege lord, who abides for them in the passes.

Meantime, in France, a wondrous tempest broke forth, a mighty storm of wind and lightning, with rain and hail out of all measure, and bolts of thunder that fell ever and again; and verily therewith came a quaking of the earth that ran through all the land from Saint Michael of the Peril, even unto *Xanten*, and from Besançon to the port of Guitsand; and there

A wondrous tempest.

was not a dwelling whose walls were not rent asunder. And at noon fell a shadow of great darkness, nor was there any light save as the heavens opened. They that saw these things were sore afraid, and many a one said: "This is the day of judgment, and the end of the world is at hand." But they were deceived, and knew not whereof they spoke; it was the great mourning for the death of Roland.

Meantime the Franks smote manfully and with good courage, and the paynims were slain by thousands and by multitudes; of a hundred thousand not two may survive. Then said the archbishop: "Our Franks are of good prowess, no man under heaven hath better, it is written in the annals of France that valiant they are for our emperor." And the Franks fare through the field seeking their fellows, and weeping from dole and pity for their kin, in all love and kindness. But even now King Marsila is upon them with his great host.

Of all the paynims only Margaris escapes the battle.

Count Roland is a knight of much worship, so likewise are Oliver and the Twelve Peers, and all the Franks are good warriors. By their great might they have made such slaughter of paynims that, of a hundred thousand, only one hath escaped, Margaris to wit. Blame him not that he fled, for in his body he bore the wounds of four lances. Back he fared in haste towards Spain, and came to Marsila and gave him tidings. . . . And in a loud voice he cried: "Good king of Spain, now ride on with all speed, the Franks are weary and spent with the smiting and slaying of our Saracens; they have lost their lances and spears, and a good half of their men, and those who

THE FRANKS SMOTE MANFULLY AND WITH GOOD COURAGE

yet live are weakened, and the more part of them maimed and bleeding, nor have they more arms wherewith to help themselves."

Marsila comes on down the valley with the mighty host that he has assembled; full twenty battles the king has arrayed. There is a great shining of helmets, set with gold and precious stones, and of shields and of broidered hauberks. Trumpets to the number of seven thousand sound the onset, and the din thereof runs far and wide. Then saith Roland: "Oliver, comrade and brother, Ganelon the felon has sworn our death. The treason is manifest, and great vengeance shall the emperor take therefor. The battle will be sore and great, such a one as was never before fought of man. I will smite with Durendal, my sword, and do thou, comrade, lay on with Halteclere. Through many lands have we carried them, and with them have we conquered many a battle; no ill song must be sung of them."

The second paynim host.

When the Franks see how great is the multitude of the paynims, that on all sides they cover the field, they call upon Roland, and Oliver, and the Twelve Peers, that they be their defense. Then the archbishop tells them his mind, saying: "Lords, barons, put from you all cowardly thoughts; and in God's name I pray you give not back. Better it were that we die in battle than that men of worship should speak foully of us in their songs. Certain it is we shall straightway take our end, nor shall we from to-day be living men; yet there is a thing I can promise ye, blessed paradise shall be opened to you, and ye shall take your place among the innocent." At his

words, the Franks take heart, and every man cries out Montjoy.

Wily and cunning is King Marsila, and he saith to the paynims: "Now set your trust in me; this Roland is of wondrous might, and he who would overcome him must strive his uttermost; in two encounters he will not be vanquished methinks, and if not, we will give him three. Then Charles the king shall lose his glory, and shall see France fall into dishonor. Ten battles shall abide here with me, and the remaining ten shall set upon the Franks." Then to Grandonie he gave a broidered banner, that it might be a sign unto the rest, and gave over to him the commandment.

Grandonie leads the second battle.

King Marsila abides on the mountain, and Grandonie comes on down the valley. By three golden nails he has made fast his gonfanon; and he cries aloud: "Now ride on, ye barons!" And for the more goodly noise he bids them sound a thousand trumpets. Say the Franks: "God our Father, what shall we do? Woe worth the day we saw Count Ganelon! he hath sold us by foul treason. Now help us, ye Twelve Peers!" But the first to answer them is the archbishop, saying: "Good knights, this day great honor shall be yours, for God will give you crowns and flowers in Paradise among the glorious; but therein the coward shall not enter." And the Franks make answer: "We will lay on as one man, and though we die we will not betray him." Then they spur on with their golden spurs to smite the miscreant felons.

Among the paynims is a Saracen of Saragossa, lord

he is of half the city, and Climborin, he hight; never will he flee from any living man. He it was who swore fellowship with Count Ganelon, kissed him in all friendship upon the lips, and gave him his helm and his carbuncle. And he hath sworn to bring the Great Land to shame, and to strip the emperor of his crown. He rides his horse whom he calls Barbamusche, that is swifter than falcon or swallow; and slackening his rein, he spurs mightily, and rides upon Engelier of Gascony that neither shield nor byrnie may save him, but he drives the head of his lance into his body, thrusting so manfully that the point thereof passes through to the other side, and with all the might of his lance hurls him in the field dead. Thereafter he cries: "These folk are good to slay!" But the Franks say: "Alack, that so good a knight should take his end."

Engelier is slain.

And Count Roland speaks to Oliver, saying: "Sir comrade, now is Engelier slain, nor have we any knight of more valor." And the count answers him, saying: "Now God grant me to avenge him." He pricks on his horse with spurs of pure gold, and he grasps Halteclere — already is the blade thereof reddened — and with all his strength he smites the paynim; he drives the blow home that the Saracen falls; and the devils carry away his soul. Then Oliver slew Duke Alphaïen, and cut off the head of Escababi, and unhorsed seven Arabs, — never again shall they do battle. Then said Roland: "Wroth is my comrade, and now at my side he wins great worship; for such blows Charles holds us the more dear." And he cried aloud: "To battle, knights, to battle!"

Hard by is the paynim Valdabrun, that had stood godfather to King Marsila; on the sea he is lord of four hundred dromonds, and well honored of all shipmen. He it was who aforetime took Jerusalem by treason, violated the temple of Solomon, and slew the patriarch before the baptismal fonts. And he had sworn fellowship with Ganelon, and had given him a sword and a thousand mangons. He rides a horse called Gramimond, swifter than any falcon; he spurs him well with his sharp spurs, and rides upon Samson the mighty duke, breaks his shield, and rends his hauberk, and drives the flaps of his gonfanon into his body, and with all the force of his lance hurls him from the saddle dead. "Lay on, paynims, for hardily we shall overthrow them!" But the Franks cry: "God, woe worth the good baron!"

Roland avenges Samson.

When Roland sees that Samson is dead, ye may guess he is sore stricken; he spurs his horse and lets him run as fast as he may; in his hand he holds Durendal, of greater worth than is pure gold, and with all the might he hath, he smites the paynim on the helm set with gold and gems, and cuts through head and hauberk and body, and through the good saddle set with gold and jewels, deep into the back of the horse, and slays both him and his rider, whosoever has dole or joy thereof. Cry the paynims: "That was a woeful blow for us." Then quoth Roland: "No love have I for any one of ye, for yours is the pride and the iniquity."

Among the paynims is an African, Malquiant, son of King Malcud; his armor is all of the beaten gold, and brighter than all the rest it shines to heaven. His horse,

which he calls Salt-Perdut, is so swift that he has not his fellow in any four-footed beast. And now Malquiant rode on Anseïs, and smote him full on the shield that its scarlet and blue were hewn away, and he rent the sides of his hauberk, and drave his lance into his body, both point and shaft. Dead is the count and done are his life days. Thereat cry the Franks: "Alack for thee, good baron!"

Turpin slays Malquiant.

Through the press rides Turpin the archbishop, — never did another priest say mass who did with his own strength so great deeds of arms, — and he saith to the paynim: "Now may God bring all evil upon thee! for thou hast slain one for whom my heart is sore stricken." Then he set his good horse at a gallop, and smote Malquiant on his shield of Toledo, that he fell dead upon the green grass.

Hard by is the paynim Grandonie, son of Capuel, king of Cappadocia; he rides a horse called Marmorie, swifter than any bird that flies; he now slackens rein, and spurring well, thrusts mightily upon Gerin, breaks his crimson shield that it falls from his shoulder, and rends all asunder his hauberk, and thereafter drives all his blue gonfanon into his body that he falls dead beside a great rock. Then he slays Gerier, Gerin's comrade, and Berengier, and Guyon of Saint-Antonie; and thereafter he smote Austor, the mighty duke that held Valence and the land along the Rhône, and felled him dead that the paynims had great joy thereof. But the Franks cry: "How many of ours are stricken."

Roland holds his ruddied sword in his hand; he has heard the Franks make lament, and so great is his sor-

row that his heart is nigh to bursting, and he saith to the paynims: "Now may God bring all evil upon thee! Methinks thou shalt pay me dear for him thou hast slain." And he spurs his horse, which springs forward eagerly; and let whoso will pay the price, the two knights join battle.

Grandonie was a man of good prowess, of much valor and hardiness, and amid the way he encounters with Roland, and albeit before that time he had never set eyes upon him, he none the less knew him of a certainty by his look and countenance; and he could not but be sore adread at the sight, and fain would he have fled, but he could not. The count smites him mightily that he rends all his helm down to the nasal, cleaves through nose and mouth and teeth, through the hauberk of fine mail, and all the body, splits the silver sides from off the golden saddle, and cuts deep into the back of the horse, that both he and his rider are slain beyond help. Thereat those of Spain make great lament, but the Franks cry: "That was well stricken of our captain."

Grandonie is smitten down.

Wondrous and fierce is the battle; the Franks lay on in their wrath and their might, that hands and sides and bones fall to earth, and garments are rent off to the very flesh, and the blood runs down to the green grass. The paynims cry: "We may not longer endure. May the curse of Mahound fall upon the Great Land, for its folk have not their fellows for hardiness." And there was not a man but cried out: "Marsila! haste, O King, for we are in sore need of thy help."

Again the paynims give back.

Wondrous and great is the battle. And still the Franks smite with their burnished lances. There is great dolor of folk, and many a man is slain and maimed and bleeding, and one lies on another, or on his back, or face down. The Saracens may not longer endure, but howsoever unwillingly they must give back. And eagerly the Franks pursue after them.

Marsila sees the slaughter of his people, and lets sound his horns and bussynes, and gets to horse with all his vassal host. In the foremost front rides the Saracen Abisme, the falsest knight of his fellowship, all compact of evil and villainy. He believes not in God the son of Mary; and he is black as melted pitch. Dearer than all the gold of Galicia he loves treachery and murder, nor did any man ever see him laugh or take disport. But he is a good man of arms, and bold to rashness, wherefore he is well beloved of the felon King Marsila, and to him it is given to bear the Dragon, around which the paynims gather. The archbishop hath small love for Abisme, and so soon as he sees him he is all desirous to smite him, and quietly, within himself, he saith: "This Saracen seems a misbelieving felon, I had liefer die than not set upon him to slay him; never shall I love coward or cowardice."

Marsila leads the third battle.

Whereupon the archbishop begins the battle. He rides the horse that he won from Grossaille, a king whom he slew in Denmark; the good steed is swift and keen, featly fashioned of foot, and flat of leg; short in the thigh and large of croupe, long of flank and high of back; his tail is white and yellow his mane, his head is the color of the fawn, and small are his ears; of all four-footed beasts

none may outstrip him. The archbishop spurs mightily, and will not fail to meet with Abisme and smite him on his shield, a very marvel, set with gems, — topaz and amethysts, and precious crystals, and blazing carbuncles; the gift it was of Galafré the Amiral, who had received it of a devil in Val-Metas. Now Turpin smites it and spares it not, that after his buffet it has not the worth of a doit. And he pierces Abisme through the body, and hurls him dead in the open field. And the Franks say: "That was a good deed of arms; in the hands of our archbishop safe is the crosier."

And Count Roland speaks to Oliver, saying: "Sir comrade, what say ye, is not the archbishop a right good knight, that there is no better under heaven? for well he knows how to smite with lance and spear." "Now let us aid him," the count makes answer. And at these words the Franks go into battle again; great are the blows and grievous the slaughter, and great is the dolor of the Christians.

The Franks are sore smitten.

The Franks have lost much of their arms, yet still there are a good four hundred of naked swords, with which they smite and hew on shining helmets. God, how many a head is cleft in twain; and there is great rending of hauberks and unmailing of byrnies; and they smite off feet and hands and heads. The paynims cry: "These Franks sore mishandle us, whoso doth not defend himself hath no care for his life." King Marsila hears them make lament, and saith in his wrath: "Terra Major, now may Mahound destroy thee, for thy folk hath discomfited mine, and hath destroyed and spoiled me of many cities which Charles of the white beard now

holds; he hath conquered Rome and Apulia and Calabria, Constantinople, and Saxony the wide; liefer had I die than flee before him. Paynims, now lay on that the Franks may have no surety. If Roland dies, Charles loses the life of his body; if he lives, we shall all take our end."

The felon paynims again smite with their lances upon shields and bright helmets; so great is the shock of iron and steel that the flame springs out toward heaven; and lo, how the blood and the brains run down! Great is the dolor and grief of Roland when he sees so many good knights take their end; he calls to remembrance the land of France, and his uncle, Charlemagne the good king, and he cannot help but be heavy. Roland's grief.

Yet still he thrust through the press and did not leave from smiting. In his hand he held Durendal, his good sword, and rent hauberks, and broke helmets, and pierced hands and heads and trunks that he threw a hundred paynims to ground, they who had held themselves for good men of arms.

And on his side the lord Oliver drave forward, smiting great blows; in his hand he held Halteclere, his good and trusty sword that had not its fellow under heaven, save only Durendal, and with it he fought valorously; all stained he was with blood even to his arms. "God," saith Roland, "that is a goodly baron. O gentle count, all courage and all loyalty, this day our friendship must have an end, for to-day through great woe we twain must part. Never again shall we see the emperor; never again shall there be such lamentation in fair France.

The Frankish folk will pray for us, and in holy churches orisons will be offered; certes, our souls will come into Paradise." Oliver slackens rein and spurs his horse, and in the thick of press comes nigh unto Roland, and one saith unto other: "Comrade, keep near me; so long as death spares me I will not fail thee."

Would ye had seen Roland and Oliver hack and hew with their swords, and the archbishop smite with his lance. We can reckon those that fell by their hands, for the number thereof is written in charter and record; the Geste says more than four thousand. In four encounters all went well with the Franks, but the fifth was sore and grievous to them, for in this all their knights were slain save only sixty, spared by God's mercy. Before they die they will sell their lives dear.

When Count Roland is ware of the great slaughter of his men, he turns to Oliver, saying: "Sir comrade, as God may save thee, see how many a good man of arms lies on the ground; we may well have pity on sweet France, the fair, that must now be desolate of such barons. Ah, king and friend, would thou wert here! Oliver, my brother, what shall we do? How shall we send him tidings?" "Nay, I know not how to seek him," saith Oliver; "but liefer had I die than bring dishonor upon me."

He would fain blow his horn.

Then saith Roland: "I will sound my horn of ivory and Charles, as he passes the mountains, will hear it; and I pledge thee my faith the Franks will return again." Then saith Oliver: "Therein would be great shame for thee, and dishonor for all thy kindred, a reproach that would last all the days of their

But Oliver chideth him.

life. Thou wouldst not sound it when I bid thee, and now thou shalt not by my counsel. And if thou dost sound it, it will not be hardily, for now both thy arms are stained with blood." "Yea," the count answers him, "I have dealt some goodly blows."

Then saith Roland: "Sore is our battle, I will blow a blast, and Charles the king will hear it." "That would not be knightly," saith Oliver; "when I bid thee, comrade, thou didst disdain it. Had the king been here, we had not suffered this damage; but they who are afar off are free from all reproach. By this my beard, an I see again my sister, Aude the Fair, never shalt thou lie in her arms."

Then saith Roland: "Wherefore art thou wroth with me?" And Oliver answers him, saying: "Comrade, thou thyself art to blame. Wise courage is not madness, and measure is better than rashness. Through thy folly these Franks have come to their death; nevermore shall Charles the king have service at our hands. Hadst thou taken my counsel, my liege lord had been here, and this battle had been ended, and King Marsila had been or taken or slain. Woe worth thy prowess, Roland! Henceforth Charles shall get no help of thee; never till God's Judgment Day shall there be such another man; but thou must die, and France shall be shamed thereby. And this day our loyal fellowship shall have an end; before this evening grievously shall we be parted."

The archbishop, hearing them dispute together, spurs his horse with his spurs of pure gold, and comes unto them, and rebukes them, saying: "Sir Roland, and thou, Sir Oliver, in God's name I pray ye, let be this strife.

Little help shall we now have of thy horn; and yet it were better to sound it; if the king come, he will revenge us, and the paynims shall not go hence rejoicing. Our Franks will light off their horses, and find us dead and maimed, and they will lay us on biers, on the backs of sumpters, and will weep for us with dole and pity; and they will bury us in the courts of churches, that our bones may not be eaten by wolves and swine and dogs." "Sir, thou speakest well and truly," quoth Roland.

And therewith he sets his ivory horn to his lips, grasps it well and blows it with all the might he hath. High are the hills, and the sound echoes far, and for thirty full leagues they hear it resound. Charles and all his host hear it, and the king saith: "Our men are at battle." But Count Ganelon denies it, saying: "Had any other said so, we had deemed it great falsehood."

The Franks hear the blast.

With dolor and pain, and in sore torment, Count Roland blows his horn of ivory, that the bright blood springs out of his mouth, and the temples of his brain are broken. Mighty is the blast of the horn, and Charles, passing the mountains, hears it, and Naymes hears it, and all the Franks listen and hear. Then saith the king: "I hear the horn of Roland; never would he sound it, an he were not at battle." But Ganelon answers him, saying: "Battle is there none; thou art old and white and hoary, and thy words are those of a child. Well thou knowest the great pride of Roland; a marvel it is that God hath suffered it thus long. Aforetime he took Noples against thy commandment, and when the Saracens came out of the city and set upon Roland the good

knight (he slew them with Durendal his sword); thereafter with water he washed away the blood which stained the meadow, that none might know of what he had done. And for a single hare he will blow his horn all day long; and now he but boasts among his fellows, for there is no folk on earth would dare do him battle. I prithee ride on. Why tarry we? The Great Land still lies far before us."

Count Roland's mouth has burst out a-bleeding, and the temples of his brain are broken. In dolor and pain he sounds his horn of ivory; but Charles hears it and the Franks hear it. Saith the king: "Long drawn is the blast of that horn." "Yea," Naymes answers, "for in sore need is the baron who blows it. Certes, our men are at battle; and he who now dissembles hath betrayed Roland. Take your arms and cry your war cry, and succor the men of your house. Dost thou not hear Roland's call?"

The emperor has commanded that his trumpets be sounded, and now the Franks light down from their horses and arm themselves with hauberks and helms and swords adorned with gold; fair are their shields, and goodly and great their lances, and their gonfanons are scarlet and white and blue. Then all the barons of the host get them to horse, and spur through the passes; and each saith to other: "An we may but see Roland a living man, we will strike good blows at his side." But what avails it? for they have abode too long.

Charles turneth back.

Clear is the evening as was the day, and all their armor glistens in the sun, and there is great shining of hauberks, and helms, and shields painted with flowers,

and lances, and gilded gonfanons. The emperor rides on in wrath, and the Franks are full of care and foreboding; and not a man but weeps full sore and hath great fear for Roland. Then the king let take Count Ganelon, and gave him over to the cooks of his household; and he called Besgon their chief, saying: "Guard him well as beseems a felon who hath betrayed my house." Besgon took him, and set a watch about him of a hundred of his fellows of the kitchen, both best and worst. They plucked out the hairs of Ganelon's beard and mustache, and each one dealt him four blows with his fist, and hardily they beat him with rods and staves; then they put about his neck a chain, and bound him even as they would a bear, and in derision they set him upon a sumpter. So they guard him till they return him unto Charles.

Ganelon a prisoner.

High are the hills and great and dark, deep the valleys, and swift the waters. To answer Roland's horn all the trumpets are sounded, both rear and van. The emperor rides on in wrath, and the Franks are full of care and foreboding; there is not a man but weepeth and maketh sore lament, praying to God that he spare Roland until they come unto the field, that at his side they may deal good blows. But what avails it? They have tarried too long, and may not come in time.

Charles the king rides on in great wrath, and over his hauberk is spread his white beard. And all the barons of France spur mightily, not one but is full of wrath and grief that he is not with Roland the captain, who is at battle with the Saracens of Spain. If he be wounded, what hope that one soul be left alive? God, what a

sixty he still hath in his fellowship; no king or captain ever had better.

Roland looks abroad over hill and heath and sees the great multitude of the Frankish dead, and he weeps for them as beseems a gentle knight, saying: "Lords and barons, now may God have mercy upon you, and grant Paradise to all your souls, that ye may rest among the blessed flowers. Man never saw better men of arms than ye were. Long and well, year in and year out, have ye served me, and many wide lands have ye won for the glory of Charles. Was it to such an end that he nourished you? O France, fair land, to-day art thou made desolate by rude slaughter. Ye Frankish barons, I see ye die through me, yet can I do naught to save or defend you. May God, who knows no lie, aid you! Oliver, brother, I must not fail thee; yet I shall die of grief, and I be not slain by the sword. Sir comrade, let us get us into battle."

Roland maketh lament.

So Count Roland falls a-smiting again. He holds Durendal in his hand, and lays on right valiantly, that he cleaves in twain Faldron de Pui, and slays four and twenty of the most worshipful of the paynims. Never shall ye see man more desirous to revenge himself. And even as the hart flies before the hounds, so flee the heathen from before Roland. "Thou dost rightly," then said the archbishop; "such valor well beseems a knight who bears arms and sits a good horse; in battle such a one should be fell and mighty, or he is not worth four deniers, and it behooves him to turn monk and get him into a monastery to pray the livelong day for our sins."

And Roland answered him, saying: "Smite and spare not." And at these words the Franks go into battle again, but great is the slaughter of the Christians.

That man who knows he shall get no mercy defends him savagely in battle. Wherefore the Franks are fierce as lions. Marsila like a true baron sits his horse Gaignon; he spurs him well and rides on Bevon — lord he was of Beaune and Dijon — and breaks his shield, and rends his hauberk, that without other hurt he smites him dead to ground. And thereafter he slew Ivon and Ivory, and with them Gerard the Old of Roussillon. Now nigh at hand is Count Roland, and he saith to the paynim: "May the Lord God bring thee to mishap! And because thou hast wrongfully slain my comrades thou shalt thyself get a buffet before we twain dispart, and this day thou shalt learn the name of my sword." And therewith he rides upon him like a true baron, and smites off his right hand, and thereafter he takes off the head of Jurfaleu the Fair, the son of King Marsila. Thereat the paynims cry: "Now help us, Mahound! O ye, our gods, revenge us upon Charles! He has sent out against us into our marches men so fierce that, though they die, they will not give back." And one saith to another: "Let us fly." At these words a hundred thousand turn and flee, and let whosoever will, call them, they will not return again.

Marsila taketh flight.

King Marsila has lost his right hand; and now he throws his shield to earth, and pricks on his horse with his sharp spurs, and with slackened rein, flees away towards Spain. Upon twenty thousand Saracens follow after him, nor is there one among them who is not

maimed or hurt of body, and they say one to another: "The nephew of Charles has won the field."

But alack, what avails it? for though Marsila be fled his uncle the caliph yet abides, he who ruled Aferne, Carthage, Garmalie, and Ethiopia, a cursed land; under his lordship he has the black folk, great are their noses and large their ears, and they are with him to the number of fifty thousand. And now they come up in pride and wrath, and cry aloud the war cry of the paynims. Then saith Roland: "Now must we needs be slain, and well I know we have but a little space to live; but cursed be he who doth not sell himself right dear. Lay on, lords, with your burnished swords, and debate both life and death; let not sweet France be brought to shame through us. When Charles, my liege lord, shall come into this field, he will see such slaughter of the Saracens, that he shall find fifteen of them dead over against each man of ours, and he will not fail to bless us."

The onset of the caliph.

When Roland sees the cursed folk whose skin is blacker than any ink, and who have naught of white about them save their teeth, he saith: "Now I know in very sooth that we shall die this day. Lay on, lords, and yet again I bid thee, smite." "Now foul fall him who lags behind," quoth Oliver. And at this word the Franks haste into the fray.

Now when the paynims see how few are the Franks, they have great pride and joy thereof; and one saith to another: "Certes, the emperor is in the wrong." The caliph bestrides a sorrel horse, he pricks him on with his spurs of gold, and smites

Oliver sore hurt.

Oliver from behind, amid the back, that he drives the mails of his white hauberk into his body, and his lance passes out through his breast: "Now hast thou got a good buffet," quoth the caliph. "On an ill day Charles the Great left thee in the passes; much wrong hath he done us, yet he shall not boast thereof, for on thee alone have I well revenged us."

Oliver feels that he is wounded unto death; in his hand he holds Halteclere; bright was its blade, and with it he smites the caliph on his golden pointed helmet, that its flowers and gems fall to earth, and he cleaves the head even unto the teeth, and with the force of the blow smote him dead to earth, and said: "Foul fall thee, paynim! *Say not that I am come to my death through Charles;* and neither to thy wife, nor any other dame, shalt thou ever boast in the land from which thou art come, that thou hast taken from me so much as one farthing's worth, or hast done any hurt to me or to others." And thereafter he called to Roland for succor.

Oliver feels that he is wounded unto death; never will he have his fill of vengeance. In the thick of the press he smites valiantly, cleaving lances and embossed shields, and feet and hands and flanks and shoulders. Whosoever saw him thus dismember the Saracens, and hurl one dead upon another, must call to mind true valiance; nor did he forget the war cry of Charles, but loud and clear he cries out Montjoy! And he calls to Roland, his friend and peer: "Sir comrade, come stand thou beside me. In great dolor shall we twain soon be disparted."

Roland looks Oliver in the face, pale it is and livid

and all discolored; the bright blood flows down from amid his body and falls in streams to the ground. "God," saith the count, "now I know not what to do. Sir comrade, woe worth thy valor! Never shall the world see again a man of thy might. Alas, fair France, to-day art thou stripped of goodly vassals, and fallen and undone. The emperor will suffer great loss thereby." And so speaking he swoons upon his horse.

The comrades disparted.

Lo, Roland has swooned as he sits his horse, and Oliver is wounded unto death, so much has he bled that his sight is darkened, and he can no longer distinguish any living man whether far off or near at hand; and now, as he meets his comrade, he smites him upon the helm set with gold and gems, and cleaves it down to the nasal, but does not come unto the head. At the blow Roland looks up at him, and asks him full softly and gently: "Comrade, dost thou this wittingly? I am Roland who so loves thee. Never yet hast thou mistrusted me:" Then saith Oliver: "Now I hear thee speak, but I cannot see thee; may the Lord God guard thee. I have struck thee, but I pray thy pardon." "Thou hast done me no hurt," Roland answers him; "I pardon thee before God, as here and now." So speaking, each leans forward towards other, and lo, in such friendship they are disparted.

Oliver feels the anguish of death come upon him; his two eyes turn in his head; and his hearing goes from him, and all sight. He lights down from his horse and lies upon the ground, and again and again he confesses his sins; he holds out his clasped hands toward heaven

and prays God that he grant him Paradise, and he blesses Charles and sweet France, and Roland, his comrade, above all men. Then his heart fails him, and his head sinks upon his breast, and he lies stretched at all his length upon the ground. Dead is the count and gone from hence. Roland weeps for him and is sore troubled; never on the earth shall ye see a man so sorrowful.

When Count Roland sees his friend lie prone and dead, facing the east, gently he begins to lament him: "Sir comrade, woe worth thy hardiness! We twain have held together for years and days, never didst thou me wrong or I thee. Since thou art dead, alack that I yet live." So speaking, the count swoons as he sits Veillantif his horse; but his golden spurs hold him firm, and let him go where he will, he cannot fall.

So soon as Roland comes to his senses, and is restored from his swoon, he is ware of the great slaughter about him. Slain are the Franks, he has lost them all save only Gualter del Hum and the archbishop. Gualter has come down from the mountains, where he fought hardily with those of Spain; the paynims conquered, and his men are slain, and howsoever unwillingly, he must perforce flee down into the valley and call upon Roland for succor. "O gentle count, brave captain, where art thou? for where thou art I have no fear. It is I, Gualter, who conquered Maëlgut, I the nephew of Droön the old, the hoary, I whom thou wert wont to love for my hardihood. Now my shield is pierced, and the shaft of my lance is broken, and my hauberk rent and unmailed; I have the wounds

The coming of Gualter.

of eight lances in my body, and I must die, but dear have I sold myself." So he saith, and Roland hears him, and spurs his horse and rides towards him.

"Sir Gualter," then saith Roland, "thou hast, as I know, done battle with the paynims, and thou art a hardy and valiant warrior. A thousand good knights thou didst take with thee, my men they were, and now I would ask them of thee again; give them over to me, for sore is my need." But Gualter makes answer: "Never again shall ye see one of them alive. I left them on the dolorous field. We encountered a great host of Saracens, Turks and Armenians, Persians, and men of Canaan and of Lude, warriors of the best, mounted on swift Arabian horses. And we fought a battle so fierce that never a paynim shall boast thereof, sixty thousand lie dead and bleeding; and we, on our part, lost all our Franks, but vengeance we took therefor with our swords of steel. Rent and torn is my hauberk, and deadly wounds I have in side and flank, and from all my body flows out the bright blood, and takes from me my strength; certes, my time is nigh spent. Thy man am I, and I look to thee as protector. Blame me not, that I fled." "Nay, I blame thee no whit," quoth Count Roland. "But now do thou aid me, so long as thou art a living man."

Full sorrowful is Roland and of great wrath; he falls a-smiting in the thick of the press, and of those of Spain he cast twenty to the ground dead, and Gualter slew six, and the archbishop five. Then say the paynims: "Fierce and fell are these men. Take ye heed, lords, that they go not hence

The three Franks still make stand.

alive. He who doth not set upon them is traitor, and recreant he who lets them go hence." Then the hue and cry begins again, and from all sides they close about the three Franks.

Count Roland is a full noble warrior, and a right good knight is Gualter del Hum, the archbishop is of good valor and well tried; not one would leave aught to his fellows, and together, in the thick of the press, they smite the paynims. A thousand Saracens get them to foot, and there are still forty thousand on horseback; yet in sooth they dare not come nigh unto the three, but they hurl upon them lances and spears, arrows and darts and sharp javelins. In the first storm they slew Gualter, and sundered the shield of Turpin of Rheims, broke his helmet and wounded him in his head, and rent and tore his hauberk that he was pierced in the body by four spears; and his horse was slain under him. The archbishop falls; great is the pity thereof.

But so soon as Turpin of Rheims finds himself beaten down to earth with the wounds of four lances in his body, he right speedily gets him afoot again; he looks towards Roland, and hastes to him, and saith: "I am nowise vanquished; no good vassal yields him so long as he is a living man." And he draws Almace, his sword of brown steel, and in the thick of the press he deals well more than a thousand buffets. Afterwards Charles bore witness that Turpin spared himself no whit, for around him they found four hundred dead, some wounded, some cut in twain amid the body, and some whose heads had been smitten off; so saith the Geste and he who was on the field, the valiant Saint Gilles, for whom

God wrought miracles; he it was who wrote the annals of the monastery of Laon. And he who knows not this, knows naught of the matter.

Count Roland fights right nobly, but all his body is a-sweat and burning hot, and in his head he hath great pain and torment, for when he sounded his horn he rent his temples. But he would fain know that Charles were coming, and he takes his horn of ivory, and feebly he sounds it. The emperor stops to listen: "Lords," he saith, "now has great woe come upon us, this day shall we lose Roland my nephew. I wot from the blast of his horn that he is nigh to death. Let him who would reach the field ride fast. Now sound ye all the trumpets of the host." Then they blew sixty thousand, so loud that the mountains resound and the valleys give answer. The paynims hear them and have no will to laugh, but one saith to another: "We shall have ado with Charles anon."

The trumpets of France.

Say the paynims: "The emperor is returning, we hear the trumpets of France; if Charles come hither, we shall suffer sore loss. Yet if Roland live, our war will begin again, and we shall lose Spain our land." Then four hundred armed in their helmets, and of the best of those on the field, gather together, and on Roland they make onset fierce and sore. Now is the count hard bestead.

When Count Roland sees them draw near, he waxes hardy and fierce and terrible; never will he yield as long as he is a living man. He sits his horse Veillantif, and spurs him well with his spurs of fine gold, and rides into the stour upon them all; and at his side is Archbishop

Turpin. And the Saracens say one to another: "Now save yourselves, friends. We have heard the trumpets of France; Charles, the mighty king, is returning."

Count Roland never loved the cowardly, or the proud, or the wicked, or any knight who was not a good vassal, and now he calls to Archbishop Turpin, saying: "Lord, thou art on foot and I am a-horseback, for thy love I would make halt, and together we will take the good and the ill; I will not leave thee for any living man; the blows of Almace and of Durendal shall give back this assault to the paynims." Then saith the archbishop: "A traitor is he who doth not smite; Charles is returning, and well will he revenge us."

"In an evil hour," say the paynims, "were we born; woeful is the day that has dawned for us! We have lost our lords and our peers. Charles the valiant cometh hither again with his great host, we hear the clear trumpets of those of France, and great is the noise of their cry of Montjoy. Count Roland is of such might, he cannot be vanquished by any mortal man. Let us hurl our missiles upon him, and then leave him." Even so they did; and cast upon him many a dart and javelin, and spears and lances and feathered arrows. They broke and rent the shield of Roland, tore open and unmailed his hauberk, but did not pierce his body: but Veillantif was wounded in thirty places, and fell from under the count, dead. Then the paynims flee, and leave him; Count Roland is left alone and on foot.

The fight of the Saracens.

The paynims flee in anger and wrath, and in all haste they fare toward Spain. Count Roland did not pursue

TAKES HIS HORN OF IVORY, AND FEEBLY HE SOUNDS IT

after them, for he has lost his horse Veillantif, and whether he will or no, is left on foot. He went to the help of Archbishop Turpin, and unlaced his golden helm from his head, and took off his white hauberk of fine mail, and he tore his tunic into strips, and with the pieces bound his great wounds. Then he gathers him in his arms, and lays him down full softly upon the green grass, and gently he beseeches him: "O gracious baron, I pray thy leave. Our comrades whom we so loved are slain, and it is not meet to leave them thus I would go seek and find them, and range them before thee." "Go and return again," quoth the archbishop. "Thank God, this field is thine and mine."

Roland seeketh the Twelve Peers

Roland turns away and fares on alone through the field; he searches the valleys and the hills; and there he found Ivon and Ivory, and Gerin, and Gerier his comrade, and he found Engelier the Gascon, and Berengier, and Oton, and he found Anseïs and Samson, and Gerard the Old of Rousillon. One by one he hath taken up the barons, and hath come with them unto the archbishop, and places them in rank before him. The archbishop cannot help but weep; he raises his hand and gives them benediction, and thereafter saith: "Alas for ye, lords! May God the Glorious receive your souls, and bring them into Paradise among the blessed flowers. And now my own death torments me sore; never again shall I see the great emperor."

and Turpin gives them absolution.

Again Roland turned away to search the field; and when he found Oliver his comrade, he gathered him

close against his breast, and as best he might returned again unto the archbishop, and laid his comrade upon a shield beside the others; and the archbishop absolved and blessed him. Then their sorrow and pity broke forth again, and Roland saith: "Oliver, fair comrade, thou wert son of the great Duke Reinier, who held the Marches of Rivier and Genoa; for the breaking of lances or the piercing of shields, for vanquishing and affrighting the proud, for upholding and counseling the good, never in any land was there a better knight."

When Roland sees the peers, and Oliver whom he so loved, lying dead, pity takes him and he begins to weep; and his face is all discolored; so great is his grief he cannot stand upright, but will he, nill he, falls to the ground in a swoon. Saith the archbishop: "Alack for thee, good baron."

When the archbishop sees Roland swoon, he has such dole as he has never known before. He stretches out his hand and takes the horn of ivory, for in Roncevals there is a swift streamlet, and he would go to it to bring of its water to Roland. Slowly and falteringly he sets forth, but so weak he is he cannot walk, his strength has gone from him, too much blood has he lost, and before a man might cross an acre his heart faileth, and he falls forward upon his face, and the anguish of death comes upon him.

The death of the archbishop.

When Count Roland recovers from his swoon, he gets upon his feet with great torment; he looks up and he looks down, and beyond his comrades, on the green grass, he sees that goodly baron, the archbishop, appointed of God in His stead. Turpin saith his *mea culpa*,

and looks up, and stretches out his two hands towards heaven, and prays God that he grant him Paradise. And so he dies, the warrior of Charles. Long had he waged strong war against the paynims, both by his mighty battling and his goodly sermons. May God grant him his holy benison.

Count Roland sees the archbishop upon the ground; his bowels have fallen out of his body, and his brains are oozing out of his forehead; Roland takes his fair, white hands and crosses them upon his breast between his two collar bones; and lifting up his voice, he mourns for him, after the manner of the people: "Ah, gentle man, knight of high parentage, now I commend thee to the heavenly Glory; never will there be a man who shall serve Him more willingly; never since the days of the apostles hath there been such a prophet to uphold the law, and win the hearts of men; may thy soul suffer no dole or torment, but may the doors of Paradise be opened to thee."

Now Roland feels that death is near him, and his brains flow out at his ears; he prays to the Lord God for his peers that He will receive them, and he prays to the Angel Gabriel for himself. That he may be free from all reproach, he takes his horn of ivory in the one hand, and Durendal, his sword, in the other, and farther than a cross-bow can cast an arrow, through a cornfield he goeth on towards Spain. At the crest of a hill, beneath two fair trees, are four stairs of marble; there he falls down on the green grass in a swoon, for death is close upon him.

Roland feeleth death near him.

High are the hills and very tall are the trees; the four stones are of shining marble; and there Count Roland

swoons upon the green grass. Meantime a Saracen is watching him; he has stained his face and body with blood, and feigning death, he lies still among his fellows; but now he springs to his feet and hastens forward. Fair he was, and strong, and of good courage; and in his pride he breaks out into mighty wrath, and seizes upon Roland, both him and his arms, and he cries: "Now is the nephew of Charles overthrown. This his sword will I carry into Arabia." But at his touch the count recovered his senses.

Roland feels that his sword hath been taken from him; he opens his eyes, and saith: "Certes, thou art not one of our men." He holds his horn of ivory which he never lets out of his grasp, and he smites the Saracen upon the helm which was studded with gold and gems, and he breaks steel and head and bones that his two eyes start out, and he falls down dead at his feet. Then saith Roland: "Coward, what made thee so bold to lay hands upon me, whether right or wrong? No man shall hear it but shall hold thee a fool. Now is my horn of ivory broken in the bell, and its gold and its crystals have fallen."

Now Roland feels that his sight is gone from him. With much striving he gets upon his feet; the color has gone from his face; before him lies a brown stone, and in his sorrow and wrath he smites ten blows upon it. The sword grates upon the rock, but neither breaks nor splinters; and the count saith: "Holy Mary, help me now! Ah, Durendal, alas for your goodness! *Now am I near to death, and have no more need of you.* Many a fight in the field have I won with you, many a wide land have I conquered with you,

He would fain break his sword.

lands now ruled by Charles with the white beard. May the man who would flee before another, never possess you. For many a day have you been held by a right good lord, never will there be such another in France the free."

Roland smote upon the block of hard stone, and the steel grates, but neither breaks nor splinters. And when he sees that he can in nowise break it, he laments, saying: "O Durendal, how fair and bright thou art, in the sunlight how thou flashest and shinest! Charles was once in the valley of Moriane, when God commanded him by one of his angels that he should give thee to a chieftain count; then the great and noble king girded thee upon me; and with thee I won for him Anjou and Bretagne, and I conquered Poitou and Maine for him, and for him I conquered Normandy the free, and Provence, and Acquitaine; and Lombardy, and all of Romagna; and I conquered for him Bavaria, and Flanders, and Bulgaria, and all of Poland; Constantinople which now pays him fealty, and Saxony, where he may work his will. And I conquered for him Wales, and Scotland, and Ireland, and England which he holds as his demesne. Many lands and countries have I won with thee, lands which Charles of the white beard rules. And now am I heavy of heart because of this my sword; rather would I die than that it should fall into the hands of the paynims. Lord God our Father, let not this shame fall upon France."

He calleth to mind his conquests.

And again Roland smote upon the brown stone and beyond all telling shattered it; the sword grates, but springs back again into the air, and is neither dinted nor

broken. And when the count sees he may in nowise break it, he laments, saying: "O Durendal, how fair and holy a thing thou art! In thy golden hilt is many a relic, — a tooth of Saint Peter, and some of the blood of Saint Basil, and hairs from the head of my lord, Saint Denis, and a bit of the raiment of the Virgin Mary. It is not meet that thou fall into the hands of the paynims, only Christians should wield thee. May no coward ever possess thee! Many wide lands have I conquered with thee, lands which Charles of the white beard rules; and thereby is the emperor great and mighty."

He turneth his face towards Spain.

Now Roland feels that death has come upon him, and that it creeps down from his head to his heart. In all haste he fares under a pine tree, and hath cast himself down upon his face on the green grass. Under him he laid his sword and his horn of ivory; and he turned his face towards the paynim folk, for he would that Charles and all his men should say that the gentle count had died a conqueror. Speedily and full often he confesses his sins, and in atonement he offers his glove to God.

Roland lies on a high peak looking towards Spain; he feels that his time is spent, and with one hand he beats upon his breast: "O God, I have sinned; forgive me through Thy might the wrongs, both great and small, which I have done from the day I was born even to this day on which I was smitten." With his right hand he holds out his glove to God; and lo, the angels of heaven come down to him.

Count Roland lay under the pine tree; he has turned his face towards Spain, and he begins to call many things

to remembrance, — all the lands he had won by his valor, and sweet France, and the men of his lineage, and Charles, his liege lord, who had brought him up in his household; and he cannot help but weep. But he would not wholly forget himself, and again he confesses his sins and begs forgiveness of God: "Our Father, who art truth, who raised up Lazarus from the dead, and who defended Daniel from the lions, save Thou my soul from the perils to which it is brought through the sins I wrought in my life days." With his right hand he offers his glove to God, and Saint Gabriel has taken it from his hand. Then his head sinks on his arm, and with clasped hands he hath gone to his end. And God sent him His cherubim, and Saint Michael of the Seas, and with them went Saint Gabriel, and they carried the soul of the count into Paradise.

THE GERMAN HERO

SIEGFRIED

Adapted by M. W. Macdowall

I

SIEGFRIED'S YOUTH

ONCE upon a time there was a noble prince in the Netherlands called Siegfried. His father, Sigmund, was descended from the glorious race of the Wölfungs, who traced their lineage back to Wodan. His mother, Sigelinde, was of equally high birth. They both rejoiced in the early signs of strength and activity displayed by their son, and hoped that when grown to man's estate, his heroic deeds might gain him glory and renown.

The boy, however, soon became aware of his wonderful strength, and showed a haughty, unbending spirit. He would suffer no contradiction: he beat his playfellows black and blue when they displeased him, even those among them who were much bigger than he. The older he grew, the more he was hated by all the other boys, and the more anxious his parents became regarding his future.

At last Sigmund told the queen that he knew of only one way to bring the young rebel under rule, and that was to apprentice him to the smith, Mimer, who lived in the neighboring forest, and who was a strong and wise man, and would teach the boy how to forge the weapons

he should one day wield as a warrior. The queen gave her consent, so the father took the necessary steps.

When the smith heard the whole story, he declared himself ready to undertake the task assigned him; for he had a strong belief in the pacifying effects of hard work. Everything went well for a time. One year passed after another, till the prince grew almost to man's estate. But labor in the smithy was irksome to him, and when his comrades set him right, he beat them, threw them down, and, on one occasion, went so far as to drag the best smith among them — Wieland — by the hair to his master's feet.

"This will not do at all," said Mimer; "come here and forge yourself a good sword."

Siegfried was quite ready to do so. He asked for the best iron and the heaviest hammer, which was such a weight that it took both hands to wield it. Mimer drew the strongest bar of iron out of the forge, glowing red, and laid it on the anvil. Siegfried swung the hammer with one hand, as though it had been a plaything; but when it came down upon the iron the blow was like a clap of thunder, the house shook to its foundation, the iron shivered into splinters, and the anvil sank a foot deep into the ground.

"This will never do," said the master, as before; "we must try another plan, my boy, if you are to make yourself a suitable weapon. Go to the charcoal-burner in the pine wood, and fetch me as much of his charcoal as you can carry on your strong shoulders. Meanwhile I shall prepare the best iron to make you a sword, such as never yet was possessed by any warrior."

Siegfried was so pleased to hear this, that picking up the largest axe he could find, he set out into the forest. It was a beautiful spring day. The birds were singing, and the grass was studded with violets and forget-me-nots. He plucked a bunch of the flowers, and stuck them in his leather cap, from a half-conscious feeling that they might perhaps bring him good luck. He went on farther and farther, till he reached the middle of a dark pine forest. Not a bird was to be seen; but the gloomy silence was broken by a gurgling, hissing, and roaring, that might easily have affrighted a less daring spirit. He soon found the reason of the noise. A dismal swamp lay before him, in which gigantic toads, snakes, and lind-worms were disporting themselves.

"I never saw so many horrible creatures in my life," said Siegfried; "but I will soon stop their music."

So saying, he picked up dead trees and threw them into the morass, till he had completely covered it; after which, he hastened on to the charcoal-burner's house. Arrived there, he asked the man to give him fire that he might burn the monsters.

"Poor boy," said the charcoal-burner, "I am very sorry for you; but if you go back the way you came, the great dragon will come out of his cave and make but a single mouthful of you. Smith Mimer is a faithless man; he came here before you, and told me that he had roused the worm against you, because you were so unmanageable."

"Have no fear, good man," answered Siegfried; "I shall first slay the worm, and then the smith. But now give me the fire, that I may burn the poisonous brood."

The lad was soon back at the swamp. He set fire to the dry wood with which he had covered it, and let it blaze. The wind was favorable, and fanned the flames to a great fire, so that the creatures were all burnt up in a short space of time. The lad then went round the dismal swamp, and found a small rivulet of hot fat issuing from it. He dipped his finger in it, and found, on withdrawing it, that it was covered with a horn-like skin. "Ah," he thought, "this would be useful in war." He therefore undressed, and bathed his whole body in the liquid fat, so that he was now covered with horn from head to foot, except in one place, between his shoulders, where a leaf had stuck to his skin. This he did not discover until later. He dressed himself again in his leather garments, and walked on, his club resting on his shoulder. Suddenly the dragon darted out upon him from its hiding-place; but three good blows of his club slew the monster. He then went back to the smithy, to take vengeance on the master smith and his comrades. At sight of him, the men fled affrighted into the forest, but the master awaited the youth's arrival. At first Mimer tried the effect of flattering words; but finding they were vain, he took to his sword. Siegfried then dealt him one mighty blow, and had no need to strike again.

Having done this, the lad went into the smithy, and with great patience and care forged himself a sword, whose blade he hardened in the blood of the lind-worm. Then he set out for his father's palace. The king sharply rebuked him for his evil deed in slaying the master smith, who was so good a subject, and so useful to the

whole country. And the queen, in her turn, reproached him with many tears, for having stained his hands with innocent blood. Siegfried, sobered by his father's reproof, and softened by his mother's tears, did not try to excuse himself; but, falling at the queen's feet and hiding his face in his hands, he said the sight of her tears cut him to the heart, and for the future he vowed that his deeds should be those of a gentle knight. Then the hearts of the parents were comforted.

From that time forward Siegfried was changed. He listened to the advice of men of understanding, and strove to learn how to act wisely and well. Whenever he felt one of his old fits of passion coming over him, he thought of his mother's tears and his father's reproof, and conquered the evil spirit that threatened to master him. The expectations of the people were great respecting him: they were sure that in him their nation had found a new hero. And then, he was so handsome and graceful, that the women admired him as much for his looks as the men did for his prowess.

II

YOUNG SIEGFRIED SAILS TO ISENLAND

His father and mother were so proud of him that they longed for the day when his name and fame should be hailed with applause in every land.

The king at length deemed that the time was come to give Siegfried and his comrades, and many young nobles of his own and other lands, the sword and armor that marked a warrior. This investiture was in those

days a ceremony of great importance, and took the same place in a young man's life as the ceremony of knighthood in later times. The solemn investiture was succeeded by feats of arms and trials of skill. Siegfried was victorious in all, and, at the end of the day, the populace shouted: "Long live young Siegfried, our king; long may he and his worthy father rule over us!"

But he signed to them, and said, "I am not worthy of such high honor. I must first win a kingdom for myself. I will entreat my noble father to allow me to go out into the world, and seek my fortune."

When the warriors were all assembled at the feast in the royal hall, Siegfried did not take his place at the upper end of the table beside his father, but modestly seated himself among the young warriors who had still their names to make. Some of the party began to talk of distant Isenland, the kingdom of the beautiful and warlike Brunhild, who challenged all her wooers to do battle with her, thereby slaying many.

They talked of the land of the Nibelungs, learned in magic; of the Drachenstein, where a flying dragon, of fiendish aspect, had taken up its abode.

Others, again, talked of the lovely princess at Worms on the Rhine, who was carefully guarded by her three brothers and by her uncle, strong Hagen.

"Oh, how pleasant it must be to see such marvels, and to seek out adventures!" cried Siegfried, and approaching his father, he asked his permission to go out and see the world.

The king understood his desire, for he had had an

adventurous youth himself; and promised to let him go, provided his mother gave her consent.

It was pain and grief to the queen to part with her son, but she at last permitted him to go; and one fine morning he set out, dressed in a shining suit of armor, mounted on a swift horse, and bearing the sword which he himself had made. His spirits were high, and his heart full of hope, as is the case with every youth of spirit who goes out into the unknown world to seek his fortune.

He went northwards in the direction of Isenland. On reaching the seashore, he found a vessel ready to start; but the skipper feared a storm, and only set sail at Siegfried's entreaty. After a quick but tempestuous voyage, Siegfried landed, and went up to the palace.

Queen Brunhild received him in the great hall, where many warriors were assembled, each of whom had come determined to woo the lady by great feats of arms.

On the following day the warriors assembled in the lists, where Brunhild joined them before long. She was clad in full armor, and looked as haughty and as beautiful as Freya, when she led the Valkyrs of old to the battles of the heroes.

Siegfried gazed at her in astonishment, she was so much taller and more noble looking than any of the maidens in her train, who were armed equally with herself. He almost wished to join the ranks of the wooers, and win her hand. He raised a stone in sport, and flung it far beyond the lists; then, turning to the queen, took leave of her with all reverence, and returned again to the vessel, saying to himself: —

"I could never love her, she is too like a man. That

maiden must be shy and modest, gentle and kindly, who would gain the heart of a brave warrior so utterly that he would think nothing of spending his heart's blood in her service."

After a quick voyage, he resumed his journey by land, now through rich and well-cultivated plains, and again through desert lands, where wild beasts and robbers had their abode. He had many a hard fight by the way, and slew all manner of giants and monsters. The minstrels sang of his great deeds in cottage and in castle, so that his name became known far and wide.

When he reached the land of the Nibelungs, the kings of that country, Schilbung and Nibelung by name, asked him to divide between them the treasure left them by their father Nibeling, for they could not agree as to what was a fair division. In payment for this service they offered him the good sword Balmung, which was the handiwork of dwarfs, and was tempered in dragon's blood. The hero divided the treasure with the utmost fairness, yet the brothers were not satisfied. They told him that they were sure he was keeping back the most valuable things for himself, and commanded twelve enormous giants to seize him, and confine him in the hollow mountain where the treasure was kept. The hero at once drew Balmung, and began slaying one giant after another. Then the royal magicians chanted their spells, and called up a thick mist; a storm arose, and the mountain trembled under repeated thunderclaps. All in vain. The last of the giants fell, and finally the two brothers were slain; then the mist cleared away, and the sun shone full on the victorious warrior.

When the Nibelung people saw the wonders that had been done, they greeted Siegfried as their king. But even yet his difficulties were not at an end. An avenger had arisen: this was Alberich the dwarf. Well armed with enchanted weapons, he came up against the bold warrior. He was now visible, now invisible, according as he drew the cap of darkness over his helmet, or took it off. After a long struggle, Siegfried overthrew him.

The dwarf was now in his power, but Siegfried could not kill a defenseless foe. Alberich was so touched with this generosity that he swore to be true to his victor: an oath he never broke. After this, no one disputed the hero's right to the land of the Nibelungs. He was recognized as king by the whole people, and also became possessed of all the treasures in the hollow mountain, and of Alberich's cap of darkness by reason of his victory over the dwarf.

When Siegfried had reduced the whole kingdom to order, and appointed proved men to be governors of the provinces, he chose out twelve noble warriors to be his trusty companions. The treasure furnished him with rings and chains of silver and gold with which to enrich his followers. The whole band looked like an assemblage of kings, under the lead of some yet mightier chieftain.

He and his men now set out on their journey homewards, and reached the Netherlands without further adventure. The king and queen were overjoyed to see their son, of whom they had for a long time heard nothing but indistinct rumors. Siegfried remained at

home for many days to rest and recover from his weariness. He often passed hours sitting at his mother's feet, as when he was a little boy, and telling her of his hopes and longings. His confidence and trust in her made her very happy. But when he stood before her in all the panoply of war, her heart beat high with pride that she had such a hero for a son.

Pleasant as it was to be at home again, Siegfried could not long be contented with idleness; his soul panted to be out in the battle of life, where alone a man preserves his strength of mind and body. He told his father that he wished to go to Worms, in the Rhine land, and try his fortune with the great warriors of Burgundy.

The king's face clouded when he heard this. "My son," he said, "do not go to Burgundy, for there dwell the boldest warriors in the whole world. No hero has as yet withstood them. There are grim Hagen, strong Ortewin of Metz, and King Gunther, with his brother Gernot. They all unite in guarding the lovely maiden Chriemhild, whom many a brave man has wooed, only to lose his life."

"Ha! That is a good story!" cried bold Siegfried. "These mighty warriors shall yield me their kingdom, and the lovely maid as well, if she be pleasing in my eyes. With my twelve Nibelungs at my back, I have no fears about the fighting."

The king's remonstrances and the queen's entreaties were alike in vain. They were obliged to consent to their son's undertaking this adventure.

III

SIEGFRIED IN BURGUNDY

The lovely maiden Chriemhild, who lived in the land of Burgundy, was the daughter of King Dankrat and his wife, the lady Ute. Her father had long been dead; but his three sons, Gunther, Gernot, and the boy Giselherr, nicknamed "The Child," regarded their beautiful sister as the costliest pearl in their crown. The royal brothers were surrounded by brave warriors, to whom fear was unknown. First among these was grim Hagen of Tronje, unbeautiful of face, and one-eyed, but known and feared, both in the land of the Teuts and in that of the Latins. He enjoyed great honor for another reason, that he was the uncle of the kings. After him came his brother, the marshal Dankwart; Ortewin of Metz; the margraves, Gere and Eckewart; Rumolt, the chief cook; Volker of Alzeyen, the faithful minstrel; Sindolt, the cup-bearer; and Hunolt, the steward. These and many other brave men, too numerous to mention, served the kings, and guarded their interests.

Young Chriemhild lived very much alone. She loved to wander about the garden and under the shady trees, and hated all sights and sounds of war. Her brothers once persuaded her to go out hunting with them; but a roe-deer fell dead at her horse's feet, and the sight so distressed her, that she went straight home, and could never be induced to go out hunting again.

One day the queen entered her daughter's room at an

early hour, and seeing her look sad and troubled, she asked what ailed her.

Chriemhild answered: "I dreamed that I had brought up a noble falcon, and had grown very fond of it; but once, when I let it fly up among the cliffs, two eagles attacked and killed it before my very eyes."

"My child," said the mother gravely, "the falcon is some noble warrior, whom you will learn to love with all your heart; and the eagles are two false men, who will seek to compass his death by cunning. May God give you strength and wisdom to turn their plans to naught!"

"Mother!" said Chriemhild, "do not speak to me of men. I fear to go amongst them. If there were no men on the earth, there would be no more wars or bloodshed."

"Who knows?" answered her mother, laughing. "Women often shed more blood, and cut deeper with their tongues, than any man with his sword. But the time will come when you will learn to love some hero, and will become his wife and chief admirer."

"Never," cried the maiden, in a voice of horror. "Mother, you terrify me even more than my dream."

Ute and Chriemhild went down to the garden. They had not been there long when they heard the sound of horses prancing in the court, and horns blowing. The queen went to see what was going on, and soon came back to tell her daughter of the arrival of some strange warriors in shining armor, and mounted on beautiful horses. She asked the girl to come and help her to receive the guests. But Chriemhild refused to do so, and Ute returned to the palace alone. Meanwhile Gunther

and his brothers had heard of the coming of the strangers. No one knew who they were, so Hagen was sent for, and he at once recognized Siegfried. He further advised his nephew to receive the hero and his men with all honor, and to enter into friendly alliance with them.

Gunther resolved to follow Hagen's counsel; but Siegfried said that he had come to prove to his own satisfaction whether the Burgundian warriors were as great in battle as he had always heard. He offered them the Nibelung realm and treasure as the prize of victory, and said that for his part he was ready to defend himself against double or threefold the number of his own party, if the kings of Burgundy would venture their kingdom against his. Bold Ortewin and other Burgundian heroes answered that it was not their habit to fight strange warriors for aught else than their armor and horses. And King Gernot came forward and said, —

"Lord Siegfried, we want neither your goods nor your blood; I rather desire to receive you as an honored guest, and become your friend and ally, if you will also be ours." So saying, he held out his hand, which Siegfried clasped in his, as he replied, —

"God be my witness that I will be your faithful friend and ally, and if you ever come to see me, I shall greet you as honored comrades."

The Nibelungs then followed their hosts into the banqueting hall, where many a toast was drunk to the success of the new alliance.

Siegfried enjoyed his stay in the land of roses and vineyards. The days passed happily in hunting or jousting; but a great longing to see fair Chriemhild took

possession of him, and grew stronger every day, for he was always hearing of her sweetness, modesty, and gentleness — qualities that had ever pleased him best in women.

Chriemhild had also heard of him; but the only time she had ever seen him was once when curiosity led her to peep out of a high window, when he was jousting in the court below. He seemed to her like the white god Balder, of whose beauty and glory her forefathers had told many a tale. At that very moment he looked up, and she shrank away, fearing lest he had seen her; but he had not. Chriemhild could not understand herself. She hoped that he would stay at Worms — she, who had never before cared who came or went.

An embassy from Daneland and Saxonland arrived at Worms. The kings Lüdegast and Lüdeger declared war against Burgundy, if the kings of Burgundy did not at once pay them tribute, as in olden times.

The tribute was refused, and the Burgundian army was called out. Siegfried and his men joined King Gunther's forces. The armies met. The Danes and Saxons numbered forty thousand; the Burgundian forces were much fewer. Each side fought bravely, but Siegfried's performances were perhaps more wonderful than any other man's. He took King Lüdegast prisoner, and brought him sorely wounded into camp; handed him over to the care of servants, and returned to the battle. The fight raged on for hours. Grim Hagen was always in the front rank, and near him were Volker, Sindolt, and Hunolt. Siegfried fought by their side, always keeping the king of Saxony in sight. At length

he reached Lüdeger, and swung his sword over his head. Then the Saxon king exclaimed, —

"Ha, Siegfried of the Netherlands, the devil has given me into your hands. I acknowledge myself your prisoner."

The battle was at an end, and the victors, covered with glory and laden with booty, set out on their return to the Rhine. They were received at Worms with great joy, and Siegfried's name was in every mouth. King Gunther prepared a feast of victory, which was to take place some weeks later, so that the wounded warriors might be well enough to take part in it. Lüdeger and Lüdegast offered a large ransom for their liberty. While the Burgundians were debating what sum it would be proper to demand, Siegfried exclaimed, —

"A king's head is neither to be bought nor ransomed for gold, silver, or precious stones. It can only be won in love through well-doing. Let the imprisoned kings go free, provided they promise Burgundy their help in war."

When the days of feasting were over, the guests all took their leave, and the Nibelung hero was about to do the same. But Gunther, acting on Ortewin's advice, begged him to tarry a little longer; for the women, and more especially his sister, Chriemhild, wished to show him their gratitude. The hero's face lighted up with pleasure, while he answered that in that case he would stay. When the king went to the women to tell them what he wished them to do, he felt at the bottom of his heart a little fear lest his sister should refuse; but, though she blushed, she consented to do his will.

At the time appointed, she entered the hall at Lady Ute's side; and as she entered, her eyes and Siegfried's met. She said a few words to him with her usual gentle courtesy, and his heart beat with a feeling he had never known before. No one in the crowd noticed the look that had passed between them except Queen Ute, who rejoiced to see it, for she loved them both. She contrived that the hero should sit next to her daughter at the feast, and that he should afterwards join them in the garden, while the other warriors sat over their wine.

IV

THE DRAGONSTONE

Siegfried returned to his lodging that evening, feeling happier than he had ever done before. Early next morning, he rode out into the wood to hunt; but his thoughts were so full of Chriemhild, that he let the game pass by unheeded. Coming back empty-handed in the afternoon, he found both town and palace in great confusion. Warriors and citizens were shouting and crowding in every open place. Queen Ute was weeping and wringing her hands. Siegfried heard broken fragments of conversation, but no one answered his questions. At length he entered the great hall, where he found Hagen, and asked him the meaning of the disturbance, and whether some dreadful thing had happened.

"That it has," replied Hagen; "it could not be worse: but what is to be, must be, and, as men said in the olden time, 'What the Norns have ordained must needs be best.' Hearken, Siegfried. When we were in the tilt-

yard this morning, we were startled by hearing a rushing noise in the air, and the brightness of the sun was darkened as if the wolf Skiöll were devouring it. The thing of terror that approached was a flying dragon, of shape so monstrous that there is none like it in all the realm of Helle. As it flew over our heads, we flung spears at it, but they bounced off its horny skin like reeds. Next moment we heard a cry, and saw that the monster had caught up sweet Chriemhild from her seat in the garden, and was bearing her off through the air so rapidly that both were soon out of sight."

"And none of you went in pursuit!" shouted the Nibelung hero, "cowards that you are!"

"Are you mad?" asked Hagen, unmoved. "Are you a bird, that you can fly through wind and cloud?"

"I shall seek out the monster," said Siegfried quietly; "if I have to wander through the whole world and Helle's realm itself, I shall find the maiden, or — my death."

He hastened away, mounted his horse, and rode by unknown paths, leading he knew not whither. A ferryman set him across the Rhine, and then he wandered about among the bare mountains, but found no trace of the dragon's abode. At length he reached a dark and trackless pine forest. The boughs of the trees hung so low that he had to dismount, and lead his horse by the bridle. As night came on, he threw himself under a tree. utterly exhausted, leaving his steed to graze at will.

At midnight he heard the tramp of a horse's hoofs, and looking up saw a faint red light approaching. The rider was a little dwarf. On his head was a golden crown, the point of which was formed of a shining carbuncle. The

hero asked the dwarf to show him the way out of the forest, and the little creature answered that he was glad they had met, for no one knew the forest better than he; adding, that he was the dwarf-king Eugel, who lived in the mountains hard by with his brothers, and thousands more of their race.

"As for you," he continued, "I know that you are Siegfried of the Netherlands. I have often seen you when I have been going about the world with my cap of darkness on. You could never have got out of the wild wood without my help, but would infallibly have found your grave at the Drachenstein, where the terrible giant Kuperan and the great dragon have taken up their abode."

On hearing this, Siegfried shouted aloud for joy, and promised the dwarf a rich reward, even to the whole Nibelung hoard, if he would lead him to the Drachenstein. This Eugel refused to do, fearing for the hero's life; but when Siegfried threatened to slay him, and at the same time seized him by the waist and shook him till his crown fell off, he promised to obey. He replaced his crown, and rode on first through the dark forest. At daybreak they reached their destination.

"Knock at that door," said the little king. "It is there that Kuperan lives. If you are hero enough to slay the giant, I and mine will serve you, for now we are entirely in the power of that monster."

Having thus spoken, he donned his cap of darkness, and vanished.

Siegfried knocked at the door, at first gently, then louder and louder, at the same time shouting to Kupe-

ran to give him the keys of the Drachenstein. Suddenly the door sprang open, the giant rushed out in a tremendous passion, and asked in a thunderous voice what Siegfried meant by disturbing his morning's sleep. With these words he hit out at the warrior with the pole he had in his hands, which was taller than any of the treetops, and every blow of which rang like a castle bell. Siegfried sprang aside to avoid the pole, and then the battle began. The giant swung his pole with such good will that trees and rocks came rattling down, but he never succeeded in touching his agile foe. At length, holding his weapon in both hands, he brought it down on the ground with such terrible force that it clove the earth three fathoms deep. As he stooped to draw it out, the hero sprang upon him and gave him three deep wounds. The giant, howling with pain, slunk into his dwelling, and slammed the door behind him. Siegfried battered at the iron door, but could not move it. He sought to force an opening with his good sword, and succeeded in cutting some holes and crannies. He peeped into the inner room, and saw the giant binding up his wounds, and then arming himself in a suit of mail that glistened like the sun when mirrored in the sea. In another minute Kuperan came forth, and the combat was renewed. After a long struggle, Siegfried had the best of it, and the giant begged for his life, swearing to be a true comrade and helper in the hero's fight with the dragon, who could not be overcome without his aid. Upon this Siegfried gave Kuperan his hand in friendship, bound up his wounds, and promised, on his side, to be his faithful comrade; but, as he entered

the cavern first, the false giant hit him so hard a blow on his helmet that he fell senseless to the ground. Eugel, who was watching all that passed, unseen, came up at the same moment and flung his cap of darkness over the hero. While the monster thought he had vanished through enchantment, and felt about for him outside, Siegfried recovered from his swoon, sprang to his feet, and tearing off the cap of darkness, cut down the giant with the first blow. He once more forgave the traitor, but forced him to go on before.

Faithless Kuperan again tried to murder the hero at the entrance of the Drachenstein, and Siegfried would not have again forgiven him if he had not needed his help to save the maiden. The giant now brought out the key, unlocked the door, and led the hero through many passages into a vaulted chamber, in which a soft twilight reigned. Looking round, Siegfried saw her whom he sought, looking pale and wan, but very beautiful. He called her name, and hastened to her. He even dared to clasp her in his arms; he felt that she returned his kiss, and the consciousness that he was loved made him feel so strong that he could have fought all the powers of hell for her sweet sake. Chriemhild wept bitterly, and entreated him to be gone before the dragon came back; but Siegfried asked for nothing better than to come face to face with the monster, hew him in pieces, and save the princess. The giant now told them that a sword was hidden in the Drachenstein, so fashioned that it could cut through the scales of a dragon. The warrior set out to fetch it, accompanied by Kuperan and Chriemhild. Siegfried saw the hilt of a sword on a

ledge of rock just below the edge of the beetling cliff. He stooped to pick it up, and at the same moment the monster seized him, and strove to fling him over. A terrible struggle began, in which the bandages came off the giant's wounds, his blood streamed down, his strength failed him, and Siegfried flung him into the depths below. A loud laugh of joy was heard, and the victor, turning, saw King Eugel, who thanked him heartily for having delivered the dwarfs from their cruel task-master. At his command a number of manikins appeared, bearing food and wine to refresh the brave warrior after his exertions. He was much in need of food, for he had not tasted a mouthful for two days. The dishes Chriemhild placed before him, and the wine she gave him, tasted better than anything he had ever eaten or drunk before.

All at once a rushing sound was heard in the air, and a howl of rage so terrible that all the dwarfs hid themselves in any crannies of the rock that they could find, and the hero and maiden were startled out of their momentary feeling of security. Chriemhild entreated, prayed her lover to conceal himself; but he was a stranger to fear, and refused to fly. The monster approached like a storm-cloud, preceded by flames of fire. It came nearer and nearer, dark, mysterious, gruesome. The mountain trembled, and the little dwarfs, hiding in the fissures of the rock, feared to be crushed to death. At Siegfried's request, Chriemhild withdrew into the vaulted chamber. And now the dragon fell upon the hero, tore away his shield with its claws, and tried to seize him in its great teeth. The warrior knew

how to act; he sprang aside, until the fiery breath that issued from the dragon's yawning jaws had cooled. Then he renewed his attack, now on the right, now on the left of the monster, taking care to avoid its claws.

All at once he felt himself encircled by the dragon's tail. He made a marvelous spring, freed himself, and sought to attack the creature in front, where it was undefended by scales. Upon this, the dragon caught him so tight within its curling tail that he could not free himself. In sore distress, he seized his good sword Balmung in both hands, and gave so hard a blow that the rocks trembled; but his object was attained. The tail was cut off, and rolled thundering over the edge of the cliff. A second blow, as hard as the first, divided the monster in two. 'T is true, the jaws still snapped at the hero; but he, with the last effort of his strength, flung the pieces over the cliff. Having done this, he fell back exhausted and half stifled by the poisonous breath with which the dragon had so long surrounded him. When he came to himself he found Chriemhild's arms round him, and the dwarfs busily engaged in burning herbs and sprinkling essences to do away with the baneful effect of the fetid odors with which the place was impregnated.

The dwarfs now led the hero and the maiden into their underground kingdom, where a feast was prepared for them. While they rested, Eugel told them that the dragon had formerly been a man of handsome figure and face, but that a mighty enchantress, whom he had deserted, changed him into a dragon, under which form he was to remain for the rest of his life, unless

NOW ON THE RIGHT, NOW ON THE LEFT OF THE MONSTER

a pure maiden should consent to marry him within six years.

The dwarfs offered the warrior his choice of all their treasures. He took certain things from them, placed them on his horse beside Chriemhild, and, accompanied by Eugel, set out on his return to Worms. When they reached the edge of the wild forest, the dwarf-king looked at him sadly, and said, —

"You must know, bold warrior, that your life will be short, but glorious. You will fall by the envy of your own kindred. But your fame will last through all ages, and your name will be held in honor by the bards of every nation as long as the human race exists on the earth."

Eugel then took leave of him, and returned to his home in the forest. When Siegfried and Chriemhild came down to the banks of the Rhine, the hero took the treasure that the dwarf had given him, and sunk it in the deep waters of the river.

"What is the use of gold to me?" he said. "My life is to be short, but glorious! Hide it in thy bosom, mighty river; may it gild thy waves and make them gleam more brightly in the sunlight! Gold does the devil's work in the hands of the children of men; it sharpens the assassin's dagger to strike some unsuspecting heart — perhaps mine. But as yet I live in the light of day. I will rejoice in my glory, and in my love for the sweetest maiden on the face of the earth."

He then rejoined Chriemhild, and called the ferryman to take them across the Rhine, after which they pursued their way to Worms, and were received there with great rejoicing.

Siegfried took the first opportunity when he found Gunther alone to ask him for his sister's hand, and the king answered, —

"I will give her to you with all my heart, if you will first help me to win a high-born and most heroic woman to be my wife. I mean Brunhild, the proud queen of Isenland, for whose sweet sake many a wooer has already gone to his death."

"I know her well," replied Siegfried, "and have seen how she bears herself in the fray. She fights bravely and well, yet I do not fear but that she will find her masters in you and me. You will do well to prepare for an early start, that we may get back before the end of summer."

Queen Ute and her daughter feared the result of the adventure, but Siegfried told them to be of good courage. He promised to stand by Gunther in life and death — even the proud queen of Isenland would scarcely prove so hard an antagonist as the monster of the Drachenstein. The king proposed to take a thousand warriors in his train, but Siegfried dissuaded him; and when at last they started, the party of adventurers consisted of Gunther, grim Hagen, Dankwart, and himself.

V

THE WOOING OF BRUNHILD

After a favorable voyage they arrived at Isenstein, and rode up to the palace. Servants hastened to meet them and take their armor and horses. Hagen was at first unwill-

ing to give up his horse and armor, but he yielded when Siegfried told him that such was the law and custom at Isenstein. The warriors entered the hall where Brunhild awaited them, clad in her royal robes. She greeted her guests with courtesy, and told the Nibelung hero how glad she was to see him again, as she had been told of his great deeds of valor; adding that she supposed he had come to enter the lists. Siegfried then informed her that he had only come as the comrade of King Gunther, his lord, who desired to try his fortune, and who was well worthy of the high prize of victory.

"This is news to me!" said the queen, "I always thought you were your own man, and owed no allegiance to another."

Then, turning to King Gunther, she told him that she had also heard of his great deeds, and asked him who were the warriors that bore him company. Gunther answered with many thanks for her kind reception, and explained who and what his companions were. Brunhild laughed, and asked whether he intended to fight aided by his three comrades.

"No, I alone am to fight," answered the king; "I alone compete for the great prize."

"Very well," said the lady, "the lists are open; prepare to do your best."

The warriors were led into the castle court, where a wide space was inclosed for the combat. The queen's serving-men surrounded it, well armed. One of these proclaimed in a loud voice:—

"If any nobly-born warrior ventures to play the threefold play with the queen, and gains the victory, she and

her kingdom shall be his; but if he is conquered, his head and wealth belong to her."

Four grooms now dragged a great stone into the lists, which the combatants were to "put" (throw). It was as large and heavy as a mill-stone. Three other men brought in the huge broadsword which the maiden was accustomed to fling.

"If the woman can play with such a thing as that," said Hagen, "she is the devil's bride. No son of man can win her!"

"If we only had our weapons," cried Dankwart, "neither the king nor we need lose our lives."

"Be of good courage, King Gunther," said Siegfried; "I will fetch my cap of darkness from the ship, and will help you without any one's seeing that I do so."

He hastened away whilst all eyes were fixed upon the queen, who now entered the court, surrounded by her ladies, and clad in full armor.

"Is it right, noble queen," said Hagen, "that your men should be armed, while we remain defenseless?"

"Bring the warriors their armor," commanded Brunhild. Then turning to Hagen, she continued: "But, for all that, you must lose your lives here. If I conquer Gunther, as I have hitherto conquered all who have entered the lists with me, your heads will fall under the axe of yonder man."

The heroes looked in the direction in which she pointed, and perceived a man clad in blood-red garments standing without the barrier, holding a sharp axe in his hand.

The trial of strength began.

Brunhild went up to the stone, lifted it in both hands, and flung it the length of six fathoms. After which, she leapt forward with one spring as light as a bird, making the point of her foot touch the stone. This feat was greeted with applause. Then came a silence as of death. Gunther advanced. Aided by Siegfried's strength, he lifted the stone, weighed it in one hand, and flung it a full fathom farther than the queen. It was a stronger hand than his that helped him both in this and in the leap that followed, which carried him beyond the stone.

In the first feat of strength, he was thus indisputably the conqueror.

Then Brunhild rose with flashing eyes, and seized the heavy spear with its sharp steel point.

"Now look to yourself, proud king," she cried, and flung the weapon with such force that it crashed through his shield, and would have laid him prostrate had not Siegfried come to his aid by turning the point towards the edge of the shield instead of the centre. Then tearing it out of the broken shield, he turned the weapon so that the blunt end pointed at the queen, and guiding Gunther's hand, Siegfried launched it at her. And immediately Brunhild fell backwards, her chain armor rattling with the force of her fall.

The combat was at an end, the victory won. Brunhild rose. She stood calmly before the people, accepting her fate; but whoever could have read her heart would have seen it full of shame, anger, and a wild thirst for vengeance. The notables of Isenland were summoned to appear at Isenstein within three days, to take the oath of

allegiance to Gunther. Brunhild begged the Burgundian warriors to remain her guests during that time. She asked where the Nibelung hero was, and when he stepped forward, and said that he had been busied about the ship and the sailors, she called him a faithless servant for not having been by while his master played so dangerous a game.

A great feast was made in the hall. Many ladies were present, but the queen remained in her own apartment. Gunther's feelings were very mixed. He was ashamed not to have won the victory single-handed, and yet he was pleased at having gained his object. Hagen drained many a cup of wine, and watched the laughing warriors around with a grim look on his stern face. When the heroes of the Rhine were taken to their common chamber, Hagen advised them to see that their weapons were at hand, because he feared the queen was nursing some treacherous plan against them. Bold Siegfried answered that he would at once set out for the land of the Nibelungs and return with an army of good men and true. He made his way to the ship unperceived in the darkness, and set sail for his own kingdom. Arrived there, he went straight to the dwarf Alberich who guarded the treasure, and desired him to call out a thousand well-armed men to go with him to Isenland. His commands were obeyed in an incredibly short time, and he and his troops set out to join his friends. On the third morning, he landed in front of the palace, to the great joy of the Burgundians. The queen, on the other hand, was anxious, not knowing what the arrival of so large a force might mean. But Gunther comforted her by explaining

that Siegfried had brought over a band of his Nibelungs to do honor to him — the king.

During the next few days everything was arranged for the proper government of Isenland, and when Brunhild at length took leave of her people and her mother's brother, who had been appointed governor, there was hardly a dry eye to be seen. The queen herself was not happy, for she felt sure she would never see her home again; but Gunther would not let her lose time, being anxious to get back to Worms to celebrate his marriage.

When the travelers arrived in Burgundy, they were received with great joy by every one. The Lady Ute welcomed Brunhild as a daughter, and Chriemhild kissed her, and promised to be a faithful sister to her. So the two maidens stood side by side: the one, grand, beautiful, and mysterious as a starlight night; the other sweet, gentle, and lovely as a May morning. None looking at them could say which was the fairest. But Siegfried had no doubt. He never moved from Chriemhild's side till they reached the castle.

That evening Gunther asked Siegfried and Chriemhild if they were still of the same mind as before, and, finding that they were, announced that he would make preparations for a double wedding on the following day.

Brunhild sat at the feast that evening by Gunther's side, pale and cold as marble, while Chriemhild sat smiling and whispering between her mother and her lover.

"King of Burgundy," said Brunhild, at last, "I cannot understand why you give your sister in marriage to one of your vassals. She ought to be the wife of a great king."

"Say not so," answered Gunther; "Siegfried is as much king as I am. He is king of the Nibelungs, and, after the death of his father Sigmund, the whole Netherlands will belong to him."

"It is a strange story," she said; "he told me himself that he was your man."

"I will explain it all to you another time," replied Gunther. "We 'll say no more about it just now."

The double wedding took place next day. When the ceremony was over, the old queen showed her daughter-in-law all her possessions, and gave up to her all authority in the house.

"Ah, mother Ute," said the young wife, "the Burgundians are rich in wealth and great in power; but they are poor in wisdom and weak in action, otherwise King Gunther never would have come to Isenland."

Without waiting for an answer, she turned and left the room.

The feast was at an end, twilight had long fallen, and the guests all sought their beds. Gunther and his queen went to their private apartments. When he would have followed her into her room, she barred the way, saying:

"This is no place for you; you can find a more fitting room elsewhere in the palace. If I permitted you to enter, I should lose my great strength."

At first he tried entreaties, then threats, and lastly force. They wrestled together, but she very soon mastered him, bound him hand and foot, and left him lying outside the door. He did not sleep much that night.

Next morning, before the household was stirring, the

proud queen loosed her husband's bonds, desired him to hold his peace, and to respect her will in future. Gunther was sad at heart the whole day long; he looked at his wife with a feeling that was almost horror, and often left the feast to walk alone in the garden. Siegfried met him there, and asked what ailed him. When he heard the strange story, he cried, —

"Be comforted, dear comrade; we have conquered this proud woman before, and I think we shall get the better of her again. I will follow you to-night, hidden under my cap of darkness, when you take the queen to her room. Blow out the candles and let me take your place. Then she shall have an opportunity of trying her great strength against me."

"Ah, good comrade," said Gunther, "I fear for your life. We did ill to bring her from Isenland to the sunny banks of the Rhine. She is a demon, as Hagen says, and has her marvelous strength from her friends the devils."

"Well," said Siegfried, "and even if a demon has taken up his abode in her heart, it shall go hard, but we'll get the better of him. I shall be with you to-night in my cap of darkness."

The kings returned to the feast, Siegfried looking as cheerful as ever, while Gunther was bowed down by manifold cares and anxieties. At midnight Gunther led Brunhild to her room, blew out the candles, and immediately Siegfried took his place. The wrestling began, Brunhild pushed him between the wall and a cupboard, and tried to bind him with her girdle. She squeezed his hands till the blood spurted from under his nails. Such a wrestling match was never seen between a man and a

maid. He used all his hero-might, and pressed her into a corner of the room with such force, that, shivering and moaning, she entreated him not to kill her, and she would be an obedient wife. No sooner did Siegfried hear this than he slipped softly away, leaving Gunther alone with the queen.

The wedding festivities lasted eight days longer; then the guests took leave of their host, and went home with many rich gifts. Siegfried and his wife also made ready for their departure. The hero refused to take any dowry with his wife, for, in his opinion, the Nibelung treasure was wealth enough.

It was on a beautiful day that the travelers reached the Netherlands. King Sigmund and Queen Sigelinde came out to meet them, and received them with great joy. An assembly of the people was summoned to meet, and after a short speech from the throne, the old king and queen placed their crowns on the heads of Siegfried and Chriemhild. The people shouted, "Long live our young king and queen! May they reign as long and as happily as their forerunners!"

It seemed as if the people's wish were to be realized, for years passed on, and all went well with the royal family. Queen Sigelinde had the great joy of holding a grandson in her arms. The child received the name of Gunther, in honor of his uncle in the distant Rhineland. And King Gunther, who had a son born about the same time, called the infant Siegfried. Not long after this the old queen was taken ill and died. This made a break in their domestic happiness; but still there was peace in the realm, and along its borders.

VI

TREASON AND DEATH

Eight years, or thereabouts, had come and gone, when messengers arrived from Burgundy inviting Siegfried and Chriemhild to a great feast. They accepted the invitation, and Sigmund determined to accompany them to Worms.

Brunhild had said one day to her husband, "King Gunther, why does your brother-in-law Siegfried never come to our court like the other vassals? I should like to see both him and your sister Chriemhild. Pray send, and command their presence at court."

"I told you before," answered Gunther, somewhat nettled, "that my brother-in-law is as mighty a king as I. He rules over the Nibelungs and the Netherlands."

"How strange!" she replied. "You cannot deny that he called himself your man when he was in Isenland."

"Oh! he only said that to help me in my wooing," said Gunther, feeling uncomfortable.

"You only say that," was her answer, "to make your sister seem to have a higher rank. But, however that may be, I should very much like to see them both at our court."

"Very well," he answered kindly, "I will send messengers to invite them to the Midsummer feast, and they will not refuse to come."

He went away, and did as he had said. Brunhild remained alone, plunged in thought.

"There he goes," she muttered. "The man that con-

quered the once heroic maiden, who thought herself strong enough to brave the battle like the Valkyrs of old. And he, what is he but a weak reed, moved hither and thither by every breath of wind that blows? How much greater Siegfried is! He is a hero, with the world at his feet. But then a vassal! To be sure, none such could dare to raise his eyes to the queen of Isenland. Had he done so, she must have scorned him, and would scorn him to this very hour."

Siegfried and his party came to Worms at the appointed time. There was no end to the feasting, tilting, and minstrelsy. Old Sigmund renewed his youth again, and delighted to talk of old days with the Lady Ute, whom he had known as a child. The young queens were always together, at church, or at the feast, or else in the gallery overlooking the tilt-yard. The only amusement to which Chriemhild did not accompany her sister-in-law was the chase.

One day when they were sitting together in the gallery watching the feats of agility and skill shown by the warriors, she said, in the joy of her heart,—

"Is not my Siegfried glorious among warriors, like a moon among the pale stars of night? He is a royal hero."

"He is well deserving of your praise," replied Brunhild, "but still he must yield the first place to my husband."

"Of a truth," answered Chriemhild, "my brother is a bold warrior, but he does not equal my husband in feats of arms."

"Why," said Brunhild, "did not he win the prize at Isenstein, while Siegfried remained with the ship?"

"Do you mean to accuse the Nibelung hero, the dragon-queller, of cowardice?" cried the young wife indignantly.

"He cannot stand so high as the king of Burgundy," answered Brunhild, "for he is not his own man, but owes fealty to my husband."

"You lie, proud woman!" exclaimed Chriemhild, her face flushing with anger; "you lie most insolently. My brother would never have let me marry a man who was not free. Siegfried owes no man allegiance, neither for Nibelungland nor yet for Netherland. The first kingdom he conquered with his own right hand, the other is his inheritance; and I, his queen, may hold my head as high as you."

"Try it, chatterer! I shall always walk into church before you."

With these words Brunhild left the gallery. Chriemhild felt both hurt and angry. It was the first grief that had ever befallen her, and she could not get over it. She went to her rooms, put on her costliest garments and the jewels that had come out of the Nibelung treasure; then, followed by her ladies and serving-men, she walked to the minster. Brunhild was already there with her train. She would have passed the proud woman silently, but the latter exclaimed:—

"Your husband is my husband's man; so wait here, and let your queen go first."

"Better for you had you held your peace," said Chriemhild. "A paramour go before a king's wife, indeed!"

"Are you mad?" asked Brunhild. "What do you mean?"

"I will tell you what I mean," replied Chriemhild, "when I come out of church," and passing before her enemy she went into the house of God.

The proud queen stood still, weeping, at the entrance door. Shame and anger struggled in her breast, and she could scarcely wait till the end of the service. At length the door opened, and Chriemhild appeared.

"Now," exclaimed Brunhild, "stop, and explain what you meant by your insulting words, you wife of a bondsman."

"Wife of a bondsman?" repeated Chriemhild, as though she had not heard the other words. "Do you recognize the gold ring on my hand, shaped like a serpent?"

"It is mine," said Brunhild. "Now I know who stole it from me."

"Well," continued Chriemhild, "maybe you also remember the silken girdle I wear round my waist, with its gold buckles and precious stones. My husband gained both the ring and the girdle that night, when he, not Gunther, conquered you."

Chriemhild went her way with the air of a hero on the day of his greatest victory. The proud queen remained standing where her sister-in-law had left her, her head bowed with shame. She sent for her husband, and when he came, told him how she had been insulted. And Gunther promised to ask Siegfried if he had any knowledge of what had taken place. He received his brother-in-law in the royal hall, and in the presence of many of

his bravest warriors. He told him what had chanced, and immediately the Nibelung hero declared, in all good truth, that he had never spoken of dishonor and of the queen in the same breath; adding that too much weight should not be laid on the words that women spoke in anger. He then offered to clear himself by a solemn oath. But Gunther interrupted him, saying he knew him of old, and that his word was as good as his bond.

"Hearken, then, ye men of Burgundy," said the hero; "you see that I am pronounced innocent of causing the humiliations your queen has endured, and indeed I have always regarded her as a modest woman, and a good wife. And now, dear comrade Gunther, chide your wife as I shall chide mine for what they have this day done, that we may never again be brought to dispeace by their idle chatter."

He then turned and left the hall; but many a Burgundian felt that their queen had suffered a cruel wrong.

Next day Brunhild began to make preparations for her departure to Isenland. The king and his brothers entreated her to stay; but she sat silent and immovable as a stone figure.

"We cannot let you go," cried the king. "We will at any cost expiate my sister's thoughtless speech. What price do you demand?"

She rose, looked round the circle of warriors, and said in a hoarse and hollow voice: —

"Blood!"

The Burgundians started, and stared at each other, none daring to speak. She continued in the same tone: —

"Not all the waters of the Rhine could wash the stain

from my honor. The heart's blood of yonder man alone can do it."

The uneasiness of the warriors increased; but Hagen said,—

"Are the bold Burgundians grown weak with age? Have they become children again? I will explain the matter. Our queen demands the heart's blood of Siegfried. Ha! The words seem to terrify you!"

The Burgundians exchanged whispers about Siegfried's strength, how it were certain death to fight with him, and, moreover, that he was innocent of all blame in the matter.

Then grim Hagen turned to Brunhild, and said, "Lady, it was against my advice that Gunther went to woo you in Isenland; but now that you are our queen your honor shall be safe in our hands. I will satisfy your desire."

"But," exclaimed young Giselherr, "it is not the way in Burgundy to return evil for good. Siegfried has always been true to us, and I, at least, will not be false to him."

Hagen tried to persuade Volker, the minstrel, to help him in the work of assassination, for Siegfried was not a man they could attack openly. But Volker refused. Ortwin offered himself in his stead, saying that the mere fact of Siegfried having given the ring and girdle to his wife was an insult to the queen of Burgundy, and must therefore be revenged.

Gunther here broke in passionately, "Such a murder would cast dishonor on all Burgundy, and it is my duty as the king to prevent it."

"Lord of the Rhine," cried Brunhild, rising from her seat, "I give you three days to think of it. After that, I either go to Isenland, or have my revenge." With these words she left the room.

"No weapon can hurt him," said the Margrave Gere, "for he has bathed in dragon's blood, and is only vulnerable in one place, on which a lime leaf fell when he was doing it."

"If he guesses what we are after," added Sindolt, "he and his thousand Nibelungs will conquer the kingdom."

"I will do it by cunning," said grim Hagen.

The king could not make up his mind one way or the other. He would — and would not. And when the warriors separated, nothing was settled. Three days later, when Gunther saw that the queen's mind was fully made up, he consented with a sigh to let his uncle Hagen try his plan.

About this time heralds came from Ludegast and Ludeger to declare war against Burgundy. Siegfried at once promised to help his brothers-in-law to defend the country. The ladies were all busy preparing the jerkins their husbands were to wear. One day when Chriemhild was thus employed, Hagen entered her room. He bade her be of good cheer, because the hero having bathed in dragon's blood was invulnerable.

"Good friend," she answered sadly, "my Siegfried is so bold that he often pushes into the midst of the enemy, and, in such a case, he might easily be wounded in his only vulnerable point."

Hagen begged her to embroider a little cross upon his jerkin to mark the place, so that he might always cover

it with his shield. She promised to do so, and immediately worked a little cross with silver thread upon the garment. Her anxiety was needless, for the next day fresh messengers came to say that the kings had changed their minds regarding war, and were now determined to be true to their old alliance. Soon after this, Gunther made preparations for a great hunt to be given in honor of the continued peace. On the morning on which it was to be held, Chriemhild entreated her husband to remain at home. She had had such terrible dreams the night before, that she feared for his life. He laughed at her, and then kissed her, saying that a bad dream would be a foolish reason for keeping away from the hunt.

"Besides that, be comforted, dear wife. What harm can happen to me? I shall be amongst faithful friends and comrades all day long. I shall take Balmung and a sharp spear with me, and I should like to see him who would dare withstand me."

He kissed her again, and hastened away. She ran to the window, and watched him until he disappeared from sight. The morning passed very pleasantly, and then the warriors sat down to their mid-day meal, which was spread out on the grass. There was food in plenty, but the wine ran short. Hagen explained that he had sent the wine on to another place, thinking it was there they should have dined; but he told his friends of a cool spring under a lime tree not far off, and offered to run a race there with Siegfried. The latter laughingly accepted the challenge, adding that he would carry his sword and hunting-tackle, while Hagen went empty-handed, that the race might be more equal. The two

warriors ran across the meadow ground towards the linden, and, as they ran, the field flowers tried to stop bold Siegfried, the branches of the trees beckoned him to go back, and the birds in the linden sang sadly as though they would say, "Turn back, noble hero, the traitor is behind you." But Siegfried did not understand the language of the flowers, trees, and birds. He trusted his friend as himself.

"Here we are at last," he cried to the panting Hagen. "Here is the clear spring; see how the water sparkles. Let us rest under the cool shade of the linden, until the king comes up, for he must have the first draught."

He laid aside his sword and other weapons, and threw himself on the flowery grass.

"How dull you look!" he continued to Hagen; "and yet it is such a bright and beautiful day, and we have had such good sport this morning. Ah, here are the others. Come, Gunther, we are waiting for you. You must have the first draught."

Gunther stooped and drank of the fresh, clear water of the spring, then Siegfried followed him, saying, with a laugh,—

"I intend to have a real good drink. But do not fear, noble friends, I shall leave you plenty. This spring is like mankind: one part goes down into the earth, and another comes up into the light of day; but it never ends."

"Very true," said Hagen; "what matters one life more or less?"

The Nibelung hero bent over the well and drank thirstily, and, as he did so, Hagen caught up his spear

and plunged it into his back, in the exact spot where Chriemhild had embroidered the silver cross on his jerkin. He did it with such force, that the point of the weapon went through his back and came out at his chest. The wounded man sprang to his feet, and, not finding his sword where he had put it, for it had been removed by one of the conspirators, seized his shield and struck the murderer to the ground. More he could not do. He sank helplessly amongst the flowers, which were dyed red with his blood. The silver stream was also reddened, and all the sky was crimson with the light of the setting sun. It seemed as if nature were blushing for the evil deed that had just been done.

Once more the hero feebly raised his beautiful head, and said, looking round upon the Burgundians, —

"Ye murderous hounds, what harm did I ever do you? Had I known of your treachery, ye had all lain dead at my feet. A devil from hell must have tempted you to do this foul deed. None of you ventured to meet me in open battle, and so you fixed upon Hagen to do the cowardly deed. Your names will be known until the latest times as those of cowardly traitors. And now, King Gunther, dishonored as you are through this ill deed, and weak of will, listen to the words of a dying man. Protect my wife, she is your own sister, protect my poor wife from Hagen."

These were the last words of the royal hero.

The warriors stood silently around him, their hearts filled with sorrow and repentance. Gunther at length said, —

"We will tell the people, who all loved the dead man,

that he was murdered by robbers. Chriemhild will never then hold us to blame."

"Nay," said Hagen, "that may not be. I will not deny what my own cunning and my own hand have done. Our queen has now the expiation that she demanded, and your honor required. Burgundy is safe from all enemies, for no man was ever Siegfried's equal, or ever will be. What do I care for the complaints of a people or for the tears of a woman? Let us make a bier of branches, that the dead warrior may be borne to Worms thereon. Ha! here is Balmung, his good sword; to-day it shall do its old master a last service, and its new master a first."

When the bier was made, the hunting party set out for Worms in very different fashion from that in which they had started in the morning. They did not arrive until late at night. It almost seemed as though the dead hero inspired both warriors and serving-men with terror. None of them would carry him up the staircase. Hagen called them cowardly loons, and raising the body on his shoulders, carried it up, and laid it outside Chriemhild's door. Next morning early the queen got up, and made ready to go to the sanctuary. She called a chamberlain, and he, seeing a dead man, whom he did not recognize in the half-light, lying in the passage, told his mistress. She shrieked aloud, —

"It is Siegfried! Hagen has murdered him at Brunhild's command!"

The servants brought lights, and they saw that she had spoken truth. She threw herself on her husband's body, and with her tears washed his face clear of the

blood stains that marred it. There he lay before her, pale, cold, and motionless; never, never again should she hear his voice — never again. The words rhymed in her ears, and seemed to madden her. She would willingly have died with him, and have gone down to the grave; or, as her forefathers believed, have rejoined him in Freya's halls.

Old Sigmund, on hearing the news, uttered no word, but his heart seemed broken. He kissed his son's wounds, as though he hoped thereby to recall him to life. Suddenly he started to his feet, and the old spirit awoke in his heart.

"Murder! Vengeance!" he cried. "Up, Nibelungs, up, and avenge your hero."

He hastened into the court, and the Nibelungs, hearing his words, crowded round him in full armor. The old man received a sword and coat of mail from them, but his trembling hands were too weak to hold them, and next moment he had sunk unconscious on the ground. The Burgundians were awaiting the assault with arms in their hands, and grim Hagen was bringing up new forces to help those already there.

The Nibelungs retired gnashing their teeth.

On the third day after this, the bier was taken to the sanctuary to be blessed by the priest. The populace crowded into the church, that they might give a last look at the dead hero, who had done so much for Burgundy. Chriemhild stood by the uncovered coffin, which was adorned with gold and precious stones. Her eyes were tearless, but all could read her sorrow in her face and

bearing. A veiled woman passed close by amongst the crowd. Chriemhild alone recognized her.

"Go, murderess," she cried, "do not approach him, lest the very dead should bear witness against you."

The unknown vanished in the crowd.

The Burgundian warriors now came to view the corpse, as custom demanded. When Hagen came up, the wounds of the dead man opened, and his blood flowed forth in a warm stream, as at the hour of the murder.

"Do not stand there, assassin," said Chriemhild; "do you not see how the dead bears witness against you?"

The bold warrior remained where he was.

"I do not deny what my hand has done. I only acted as I was bound to act by my fealty to my liege lord and his queen."

If Chriemhild had had a sword in her hand, and had been possessed of a man's strength, Hagen had scarcely quitted the sanctuary alive.

Many gifts were made to the poor in honor of the dead hero, who was buried on the fourth day. The grave-chamber was richly decorated, and over it rose a high mound. Chriemhild followed the coffin to its quiet resting-place. There the lid was opened once more at her command. She kissed and wept over the pale face of her husband. Her women at length had to bear her away, for she would have remained there forever. Hagen was standing without, grim and unmoved as ever, and said with his usual fatalism, "What has happened, must needs have happened. The will of the Norns must be done." The queen did not hear him. She did not even

see how Gunther, Gernot, and many of the other warriors tried to hide their grief and repentance. Her thoughts were all with the dead.

Sigmund and the Nibelungs prepared to return home. They wanted to take Chriemhild with them, to guard her from the false Burgundians; but she would not leave her husband's grave, and only begged the old king and the Margrave Eckewart to take care of her little son, and bring him up to be like his father. For she said he was an orphan, fatherless, and perhaps motherless. She had only one wish, which she whispered in the old man's ear — the wish for vengeance. Sigmund took leave of none but the Lady Ute, who mourned for Siegfried as if he had been a son of her own, and of Giselher, the youngest of the brothers. Then he set out for the Netherlands.

Time passed on, and it almost seemed as though Chriemhild had grown content, and had become reconciled to her brother. Grim Hagen alone seemed to fill her with horror, and Brunhild she also avoided. She one day told her brother that she wished the Nibelung treasure to be brought up to Worms, as it was her private property. Gunther rejoiced at this proof of her renewed confidence in him, and at once consented to send for it. Alberich delivered the treasure to the messengers without hesitation, and at length it arrived at Worms. The queen made generous gifts to the people, and whenever she found a brave warrior who possessed but few worldly goods, she would provide him with all that was necessary for his calling, and with daily pay besides. So that she gradually became complete mistress

of a small army, which grew daily larger, and more powerful.

Hagen warned the kings of this; he told them that the Lady Chriemhild meditated vengeance. He did not care for his own life, he said, but the fair land of Burgundy must not fall into her hands. The only way that he could see of preventing this consummation would be for the kings to take the Nibelung treasure under their own care. The brothers would not consent. Gernot said that enough harm had been done to their sister already without heaping small indignities on her. Once, when his liege lords were absent, Hagen, who had always considered that prevention was better than cure, called his men together, and fell upon the warders who had charge of the Nibelung treasure. He carried off all that remained of it, and sank it in the deep waters of the Rhine. It was of little use that the kings heard of his ill deed on their return; it was of little use that Chriemhild made indignant complaint: the deed was done, and could not be undone.

"If you were not our uncle," said Gunther and Gernot, "this should have cost you your life."

A short time afterwards, Hagen showed his nephews the place in the Rhine where he had hidden the treasure, and made them swear that none of them would betray its hiding-place as long as one of them was alive. Chriemhild was sad and sorrowful as before; she always sat with her mother, and embroidered tapestry in which she depicted the scene of Baldur's death, and showed how he was cruelly slain by his brother Höder, and how Nanna died of a broken heart, and shared her husband's

bier. But in Baldur every one recognized the features of her hero, and in Nanna her own; while Höder had the features, garments, and murderous weapon of grim Hagen. She often held the needle suspended in her fingers, and sat watching the picture thoughtfully. When the Lady Ute asked her, on such occasions, "What are you thinking of, my child?" she would answer, "I was thinking of Hagen."

THE SPANISH HERO

RODRIGO AND THE LEPER

Adapted by Robert Southey

RODRIGO forthwith set out upon the road, and took with him twenty knights. And as he went he did great good, and gave alms, feeding the poor and needy. And upon the way they found a leper, struggling in a quagmire, who cried out to them with a loud voice to help him for the love of God; and when Rodrigo heard this, he alighted from his beast and helped him, and placed him upon the beast before him, and carried him with him in this manner to the inn where he took up his lodging that night. At this were his knights little pleased. And when supper was ready he bade his knights take their seats, and he took the leper by the hand, and seated him next himself, and ate with him out of the same dish. The knights were greatly offended at this foul sight, insomuch that they rose up and left the chamber. But Rodrigo ordered a bed to be made ready for himself and for the leper, and they twain slept together. When it was midnight and Rodrigo was fast asleep, the leper breathed against him between his shoulders, and that breath was so strong that it passed through him, even through his breast; and he awoke, being astounded, and felt for the leper by him, and found him not; and he began to call him, but there was no reply. Then he arose in fear, and called for light, and it was

brought him; and he looked for the leper and could see nothing; so he returned into the bed, leaving the light burning. And he began to think within himself what had happened, and of that breath which had passed through him, and how the leper was not there. After a while, as he was thus musing, there appeared before him one in white garments, who said unto him, Sleepest thou or wakest thou, Rodrigo? and he answered and said, I do not sleep: but who art thou that bringest with thee such brightness and so sweet an odor? Then said he, I am Saint Lazarus, and know that I was a leper to whom thou didst so much good and so great honor for the love of God; and because thou didst this for his sake hath God now granted thee a great gift; for whensoever that breath which thou hast felt shall come upon thee, whatever thing thou desirest to do, and shalt then begin, that shalt thou accomplish to thy heart's desire, whether it be in battle or aught else, so that thy honor shall go on increasing from day to day; and thou shalt be feared both by Moors and Christians, and thy enemies shall never prevail against thee, and thou shalt die an honorable death in thine own house, and in thy renown, for God hath blessed thee; — therefore go thou on, and evermore persevere in doing good; and with that he disappeared. And Rodrigo arose and prayed to our lady and intercessor St. Mary, that she would pray to her blessed son for him to watch over both his body and soul in all his undertakings; and he continued in prayer till the day broke. Then he proceeded on his way, and performed his pilgrimage, doing much good for the love of God and of St. Mary.

THE KNIGHTING OF RODRIGO

Adapted by Robert Southey

NOW it came to pass that while the king lay before Coimbra, there came a pilgrim from the land of Greece on pilgrimage to Santiago; his name was Estiano, and he was a bishop. And as he was praying in the church he heard certain of the townsmen and of the pilgrims saying that Santiago was wont to appear in battle like a knight, in aid of the Christians. And when he heard this, it nothing pleased him, and he said unto them, Friends, call him not a knight, but rather a fisherman. Upon this it pleased God that he should fall asleep, and in his sleep Santiago appeared to him with a good and cheerful countenance, holding in his hand a bunch of keys, and said unto him, Thou thinkest it a fable that they should call me a knight, and sayest that I am not so: for this reason am I come unto thee that thou never more mayest doubt concerning my knighthood; for a knight of Jesus Christ I am, and a helper of the Christians against the Moors. While he was thus saying, a horse was brought him the which was exceeding white, and the apostle Santiago mounted upon it, being well clad in bright and fair armor, after the manner of a knight. And he said to Estiano, I go to help King Don Ferrando, who has lain these seven months before Coimbra, and to-morrow, with these keys which thou

seest, will I open the gates of the city unto him at the hour of tierce, and deliver it into his hand. Having said this, he departed. And the bishop, when he awoke in the morning, called together the clergy and people of Compostella, and told them what he had seen and heard. And as he said, even so did it come to pass; for tidings came, that on that day, and at the hour of tierce, the gates of the city had been opened.

King Don Ferrando then assembled his counts and chief captains, and told them all that the monks of Lorvam had done, in bringing him to besiege the city, and in supplying his army in their time of need: and the counts and chief captains made answer and said, Certes, O king, if the monks had not given us the stores of their monastery, thou couldest not have taken the city at this time. The king then called for the abbot and the brethren, for they were with him in the host, and said the hours to him daily, and mass in St. Andre's, and buried there and in their monastery as many as had died during the siege, either of arrow-wounds or by lances, or of their own infirmities. So they came before him and gave him joy of his conquest; and he said unto them, Take ye now of this city as much as ye desire, since by God's favor and your council I have won it. But they made answer, Thanks be to God and to you, and to your forefathers, we have enough and shall have, if so be that we have your favor and dwell among Christians. Only for the love of God, and for the remedy of your own soul, give us one church with its dwelling-houses within the city, and confirm unto us the gifts made to us in old times by your forefathers, and the good men to whom

God give a happy rest. With that the king turned to his sons and his soldiers, and said, Of a truth, by our Creator, these who desire so little are men of God. I would have given them half the city, and they will have only a single church! Now therefore, since they require but this, on the part of God Almighty let us grant and confirm unto them what they ask, to the honor of God and St. Mamede. And the brethren brought him their charters of King Ramiro, and King Bermudo, and King Alfonso, and of Gonzalo Moniz, who was a knight and married a daughter of King Bermudo, and of other good men. And the king confirmed them, and he bade them make a writing of all which had passed between him and them at the siege of Coimbra; and when they brought him the writing, they brought him also a crown of silver and of gold, which had been King Bermudo's, and which Gonzalo Moniz had given to the monastery in honor of God and St. Mamede. The king saw the crown, how it was set with precious stones, and said to them, To what end bring ye hither this crown? And they said, That you should take it, sire, in return for the good which you have done us. But he answered, Far be it from me that I should take from your monastery what the good men before me have given to it! Take ye back the crown, and take also ten marks of silver, and make with the money a good cross, to remain with you forever. And he who shall befriend you, may God befriend him; but he who shall disturb you or your monastery, may he be cursed by the living God and by his saints. So the king signed the writing which he had commanded to be made, and his sons and chief captains signed it also, and in the

writing he enjoined his children and his children's children, as many as should come after him, to honor and protect the monastery of Lorvam; upon his blessing he charged them so to do, because he had found the brethren better than all the other monks in his dominions.

Then King Don Ferrando knighted Rodrigo of Bivar in the great mosque of Coimbra, which he dedicated to St. Mary. And the ceremony was after this manner: the king girded on his sword, and gave him the kiss, but not the blow. To do him more honor the queen gave him his horse, and the Infanta Doña Urraca fastened on his spurs; and from that day forth he was called Ruydiez. Then the king commanded him to knight nine noble squires with his own hand; and he took his sword before the altar, and knighted them. The king then gave Coimbra to the keeping of Don Sisnando, bishop of Iria; a man, who having more hardihood than religion, had by reason of his misdeeds gone over to the Moors, and sorely infested the Christians in Portugal. But during the siege he had come to the king's service, and bestirred himself well against the Moors; and therefore the king took him into his favor, and gave him the city to keep, which he kept, and did much evil to the Moors till the day of his death. And the king departed and went to Compostella, to return thanks to Santiago.

But then Benalfagi, who was the lord of many lands in Estremadura, gathered together a great power of the Moors and built up the walls of Montemor, and from thence waged war against Coimbra, so that they of Coimbra called upon the king for help. And the king

came up against the town, and fought against it, and took it. Great honor did Ruydiez win at that siege; for having to protect the foragers, the enemy came out upon him, and thrice in one day was he beset by them; but he, though sorely pressed by them, and in great peril, nevertheless would not send to the camp for succor, but put forth his manhood and defeated them. And from that day the king gave more power into his hands, and made him head over all his household.

Now the men of Leon besought the king that he would repeople Zamora, which had lain desolate since it was destroyed by Almanzor. And he went thither and peopled the city, and gave to it good privileges. And while he was there came messengers from the five kings who were vassals to Ruydiez of Bivar, bringing him their tribute; and they came to him, he being with the king, and called him Cid, which signifieth lord, and would have kissed his hands, but he would not give them his hand till they had kissed the hand of the king. And Ruydiez took the tribute and offered the fifth thereof to the king, in token of his sovereignty; and the king thanked him, but would not receive it; and from that time he ordered that Ruydiez should be called the Cid, because the Moors had so called him.

THE CID IS DRIVEN INTO BANISHMENT

Adapted by Robert Southey

AFTER this King Don Alfonso assembled together all his power and went against the Moors. And the Cid should have gone with him, but he fell sick and perforce therefore abode at home. And while the king was going through Andalusia, having the land at his mercy, a great power of the Moors assembled together on the other side, and entered the land, and besieged the castle of Gormaz, and did much evil. At this time the Cid was gathering strength; and when he heard that the Moors were in the country, laying waste before them, he gathered together what force he could, and went after them; and the Moors, when they heard this, dared not abide his coming, but began to fly. And the Cid followed them to Atienza, and to Ciguenza, and Fita, and Guadalajara, and through the whole land of St. Esteban, as far as Toledo, slaying and burning, and plundering and destroying, and laying hands on all whom he found, so that he brought back seven thousand prisoners, men and women; and he and all his people returned rich and with great honor. But when the king of Toledo heard of the hurt which he had received at the hands of the Cid, he sent to King Don Alfonso to complain thereof, and the king was greatly troubled. And then the Ricos-omes who wished ill to

the Cid, had the way open to do him evil with the king, and they said to the king, Sir, Ruydiez hath broken your faith, and the oath and promise which you made to the king of Toledo; and he hath done this for no other reason but that the Moors of Toledo may fall upon us here, and slay both you and us. And the king believed what they said, and was wroth against the Cid, having no love towards him because of the oath which he had pressed upon him at Burgos concerning the death of King Don Sancho, his brother. And he went with all speed to Burgos, and sent from thence to bid the Cid come unto him.

Now my Cid knew the evil disposition of the king towards him, and when he received his bidding, he made answer that he would meet him between Burgos and Bivar. And the king went out from Burgos and came nigh unto Bivar; and the Cid came up to him and would have kissed his hand, but the king withheld it, and said angrily unto him, Ruydiez, quit my land. Then the Cid clapt spurs to the mule upon which he rode, and vaulted into a piece of ground which was his own inheritance, and answered, Sir, I am not in your land, but in my own. And the king replied full wrathfully, Go out of my kingdoms without any delay. And the Cid made answer, Give me then thirty days' time, as is the right of the hidalgos; and the king said he would not, but that if he were not gone in nine days' time he would come and look for him. The counts were well pleased at this; but all the people of the land were sorrowful. And then the king and the Cid parted. And the Cid sent for all his friends and his kinsmen and vassals, and told them how King Don Alfonso

had banished him from the land, and asked of them who would follow him into banishment, and who would remain at home. Then Alvar Fañez, who was his cousin-german, came forward and said, Cid, we will all go with you, through desert and through peopled country, and never fail you. In your service will we spend our mules and horses, our wealth and our garments, and ever while we live be unto you loyal friends and vassals. And they all confirmed what Alvar Fañez had said; and the Cid thanked them for their love, and said that there might come a time in which he should guerdon them.

And as he was about to depart he looked back upon his own home, and when he saw his hall deserted, the household chests unfastened, the doors open, no cloaks hanging up, no seats in the porch, no hawks upon the perches, the tears came into his eyes, and he said, My enemies have done this. . . . God be praised for all things. And he turned toward the east and knelt and said, Holy Mary Mother, and all saints, pray to God for me, that he may give me strength to destroy all the pagans, and to win enough from them to requite my friends therewith, and all those who follow and help me. Then he called for Alvar Fañez and said unto him, Cousin, the poor have no part in the wrong which the king hath done us; see now that no wrong be done unto them along our road: and he called for his horse. And then an old woman who was standing at her door said, Go in a lucky minute, and make spoil of whatever you wish. And with this proverb he rode on, saying, Friends, by God's good pleasure we shall return to Castile with great honor and great gain. And as they went

out from Bivar they had a crow on their right hand, and when they came to Burgos they had a crow on the left.

My Cid Ruydiez entered Burgos, having sixty streamers in his company. And men and women went forth to see him, and the men of Burgos and the women of Burgos were at their windows, weeping, so great was their sorrow; and they said with one accord, God, how good a vassal if he had but a good lord! and willingly would each have bade him come in, but no one dared so to do; for King Don Alfonso in his anger had sent letters to Burgos, saying that no man should give the Cid a lodging; and that whosoever disobeyed should lose all that he had, and moreover the eyes in his head. Great sorrow had these Christian folk at this, and they hid themselves when he came near them because they did not dare speak to him; and my Cid went to his Posada, and when he came to the door he found it fastened, for fear of the king. And his people called out with a loud voice, but they within made no answer. And the Cid rode up to the door, and took his foot out of the stirrup, and gave it a kick, but the door did not open with it, for it was well secured; a little girl of nine years old then came out of one of the houses and said unto him, O Cid, the king hath forbidden us to receive you. We dare not open our doors to you, for we should lose our houses and all that we have, and the eyes in our head. Cid, our evil would not help you, but God and all his saints be with you. And when she had said this, she returned into the house. And when the Cid knew what the king had done, he turned away from the door and rode up to St. Mary's, and there he alighted and knelt down and prayed

with all his heart; and then he mounted again and rode out of the town, and pitched his tent near Arlanzon, upon the Glera, that is to say, upon the sands. My Cid Ruydiez, he who in a happy hour first girt on his sword, took up his lodging upon the sands, because there was none who would receive him within their door. He had a good company round about him, and there he lodged as if he had been among the mountains.

Moreover the king had given orders that no food should be sold them in Burgos, so that they could not buy even a pennyworth. But Martin Antolinez, who was a good Burgalese, he supplied my Cid and all his company with bread and wine abundantly. Campeador, said he to the Cid, to-night we will rest here, and to-morrow we will be gone: I shall be accused for what I have done in serving you, and shall be in the king's displeasure; but following your fortunes, sooner or later, the king will have me for his friend, and if not, I do not care a fig for what I leave behind. Now this Martin Antolinez was nephew unto the Cid, being the son of his brother, Ferrando Diaz. And the Cid said unto him, Martin Antolinez, you are a bold lancier; if I live I will double you your pay. You see I have nothing with me, and yet must provide for my companions. I will take two chests and fill them with sand, and do you go in secret to Rachel and Vidas, and tell them to come hither privately; for I cannot take my treasures with me because of their weight, and will pledge them in their hands. Let them come for the chests at night, that no man may see them. God knows that I do this thing more of necessity than of willfulness; but by God's good help I shall redeem all. Now

Rachel and Vidas were rich Jews, from whom the Cid used to receive money for his spoils. And Martin Antolinez went in quest of them, and he passed through Burgos and entered into the castle; and when he saw them he said, Ah, Rachel and Vidas, my dear friends! now let me speak with ye in secret. And they three went apart. And he said to them, Give me your hands that you will not discover me neither to Moor nor Christian! I will make you rich men forever. The Campeador went for the tribute and he took great wealth, and some of it he has kept for himself. He has two chests full of gold; ye know that the king is in anger against him, and he cannot carry these away with him without their being seen. He will leave them therefore in your hands, and you shall lend him money upon them, swearing with great oaths and upon your faith, that ye will not open them till a year be past. Rachel and Vidas took counsel together and answered, We well knew he got something when he entered the land of the Moors; he who has treasures does not sleep without suspicion; we will take the chests, and place them where they shall not be seen. But tell us with what will the Cid be contented, and what gain will he give us for the year? Martin Antolinez answered like a prudent man, My Cid requires what is reasonable; he will ask but little to leave his treasures in safety. Men come to him from all parts. He must have six hundred marks. And the Jews said, We will advance him so much. Well then, said Martin Antolinez, ye see that the night is advancing; the Cid is in haste, give us the marks. This is not the way of business, said they; we must take first, and then give. Ye say well,

replied the Burgalese: come then to the Campeador, and we will help you to bring away the chests, so that neither Moors nor Christians may see us. So they went to horse and rode out together, and they did not cross the bridge but rode through the water that no man might see them, and they came to the tent of the Cid.

Meantime the Cid had taken two chests, which were covered with leather of red and gold, and the nails which fastened down the leather were well gilt; they were ribbed with bands of iron, and each fastened with three locks; they were heavy, and he filled them with sand. And when Rachel and Vidas entered his tent with Martin Antolinez, they kissed his hand; and the Cid smiled and said to them, Ye see that I am going out of the land, because of the king's displeasure; but I shall leave something with ye. And they made answer, Martin Antolinez has covenanted with us, that we shall give you six hundred marks upon these chests and keep them a full year, swearing not to open them till that time be expired, else shall we be perjured. Take the chests, said Martin Antolinez; I will go with you, and bring back the marks, for my Cid must move before cock-crow. So they took the chests, and though they were both strong men they could not raise them from the ground; and they were full glad of the bargain which they had made. And Rachel then went to the Cid and kissed his hand and said, Now, Campeador, you are going from Castile among strange nations, and your gain will be great, even as your fortune is. I kiss your hand, Cid, and have a gift for you, a red skin; it is Moorish and honorable. And the Cid said, It pleases me: give it me if ye have

brought it; if not, reckon it upon the chests. And they departed with the chests, and Martin Antolinez and his people helped them, and went with them. And when they had placed the chests in safety, they spread a carpet in the middle of the hall, and laid a sheet upon it, and they threw down upon it three hundred marks of silver. Don Martin counted them, and took them without weighing. The other three hundred they paid in gold. Don Martin had five squires with him, and he loaded them all with the money. And when this was done he said to them, Now Don Rachel and Vidas, you have got the chests, and I who got them for you well deserve a pair of hose. And the Jews said to each other, Let us give him a good gift for this which he has done; and they said to him, We will give you enough for hose and for a rich doublet and a good cloak; you shall have thirty marks. Don Martin thanked them and took the marks, and bidding them both farewell, he departed right joyfully.

When Martin Antolinez came into the Cid's tent he said unto him, I have sped well, Campeador! you have gained six hundred marks, and I thirty. Now then, strike your tent and be gone. The time draws on, and you may be with your lady wife at St. Pedro de Cardeña, before the cock crows. So the tent was struck, and my Cid and his company went to horse at this early hour. And the Cid turned his horse's head toward St. Mary's, and with his right hand he blessed himself on the forehead, and he said, God be praised! help me, St. Mary. I go from Castile because the anger of the king is against me, and I know not whether I shall ever enter it again in all my days. Help me, glorious Virgin, in my goings, both

by night and by day. If you do this and my lot be fair, I will send rich and goodly gifts to your altar, and will have a thousand masses sung there. Then with a good heart he gave his horse the reins. And Martin Antolinez said to him, Go ye on; I must back to my wife and tell her what she is to do during my absence. I shall be with you in good time. And back he went to Burgos, and my Cid and his company pricked on. The cocks were crowing amain, and the day began to break, when the good Campeador reached St. Pedro's. The Abbot Don Sisebuto was saying matins, and Doña Ximena and five of her ladies of good lineage were with him, praying to God and St. Peter to help my Cid. And when he called at the gate and they knew his voice, God, what a joyful man was the Abbot Don Sisebuto! Out into the courtyard they went with torches and with tapers, and the abbot gave thanks to God that he now beheld the face of my Cid. And the Cid told him all that had befallen him, and how he was a banished man; and he gave him fifty marks for himself, and a hundred for Doña Ximena and her children. Abbot, said he, I leave two little girls behind me, whom I commend to your care. Take you care of them, and of my wife and of her ladies: when this money be gone, if it be not enough, supply them abundantly; for every mark which you expend upon them I will give the monastery four. And the abbot promised to do this with a right good-will. Then Doña Ximena came up and her daughters with her, each of them borne in arms, and she knelt down on both her knees before her husband, weeping bitterly, and she would have kissed his hand; and she said to him, Lo, now you are banished from the land by

mischief-making men, and here am I with your daughters, who are little ones and of tender years, and we and you must be parted, even in your lifetime. For the love of St. Mary, tell me now what we shall do. And the Cid took the children in his arms, and held them to his heart and wept, for he dearly loved them. Please God and St. Mary, said he, I shall yet live to give these my daughters in marriage with my own hands, and to do you service yet, my honored wife, whom I have ever loved, even as my own soul.

A great feast did they make that day in the monastery for the good Campeador, and the bells of St. Pedro's rung merrily. Meantime the tidings had gone through Castile how my Cid was banished from the land, and great was the sorrow of the people. Some left their houses to follow him, others forsook their honorable offices which they held. And that day a hundred and fifteen knights assembled at the bridge of Arlanzon, all in quest of my Cid; and there Martin Antolinez joined them, and they rode on together to St. Pedro's. And when he of Bivar knew what a goodly company were coming to join him, he rejoiced in his own strength, and rode out to meet them and greeted them full courteously; and they kissed his hand, and he said to them, I pray to God that I may one day requite ye well, because ye have forsaken your houses and your heritages for my sake, and I trust that I shall pay ye twofold. Six days of the term allotted were now gone, and three only remained: if after that time he should be found within the king's dominions, neither for gold nor for silver could he then escape. That day they feasted together, and when it was evening

the Cid distributed among them all that he had, giving to each man according to what he was; and he told them that they must meet at mass after matins, and depart at that early hour. Before the cock crew they were ready, and the abbot said the mass of the Holy Trinity; and when it was done they left the church and went to horse. And my Cid embraced Doña Ximena and his daughters, and blessed them; and the parting between them was like separating the nail from the quick flesh; and he wept and continued to look round after them. Then Alvar Fañez came up to him and said, Where is your courage, my Cid? In a good hour were you born of woman. Think of our road now; these sorrows will yet be turned into joy. And the Cid spake again to the abbot, commending his family to his care; — well did the abbot know that he should one day receive good guerdon. And as he took leave of the Cid, Alvar Fañez said to him, Abbot, if you see any who come to follow us, tell them what route we take, and bid them make speed, for they may reach us either in the waste or in the peopled country. And then they loosed the reins and pricked forward.

That night my Cid lay at Spinar de Can, and people flocked to him from all parts, and early on the morrow he set out; Santestevan lay on his left hand, which is a good city, and Ahilon on the right, which belongs to the Moors, and he passed by Alcobiella, which is the boundary of Castile. And he went by the Calzada de Quinea, and crossed the Douro upon rafts. That night, being the eighth, they rested at Figeruela, and more adventurers came to join him. And when my Cid was fast asleep, the Angel Gabriel appeared to him in a vision, and said, Go

on boldly and fear nothing; for everything shall go well with thee as long as thou livest, and all the things which thou beginnest, thou shalt bring to good end, and thou shalt be rich and honorable. And the Cid awoke and blessed himself; and he crossed his forehead and rose from his bed, and knelt down and gave thanks to God for the mercy which he had vouchsafed him, being right joyful because of the vision. Early on the morrow they set forth; now this was the last day of the nine. And they went on towards the Sierra de Miedes. Before sunset the Cid halted and took account of his company; there were three hundred lances, all with streamers, besides foot-soldiers. And he said unto them, Now take and eat, for we must pass this great and wild Sierra, that we may quit the land of King Alfonso this night. To-morrow he who seeks us may find us. So they passed the Sierra that night.

THE CID COMES TO THE AID OF HIS KING

Adapted by Robert Southey

AT this time it came to pass that Almofalez, a Moor of Andalusia, rose up with the Castle of Rueda, which was held for King Don Alfonso. And because he held prisoner there the brother of Adefir, another Moor, Adefir sent to the king of Castile, beseeching him to come to succor him, and recover the castle. And the king sent the Infante Don Ramiro his cousin, and the Infante Don Sancho, son to the king of Navarre, and Count Don Gonzalo Salvadores, and Count Don Nuño Alvarez, and many other knights with them; and they came to the castle, and Almofalez said he would not open the gates to them, but if the king came he would open to him. And when King Don Alfonso heard this, incontinently he came to Rueda. And Almofalez besought him to enter to a feast which he had prepared; howbeit the king would not go in, neither would his people have permitted him so to have risked his person. But the Infante Don Sancho entered, and Don Nuño, and Don Gonzalo, and fifteen other knights; and as soon as they were within the gate, the Moors threw down great stones upon them and killed them all. This was the end of the good Count Don Gonzalo Salvadores, who was so good a knight in battle that he was called He of the Four Hands. The bodies

were ransomed, seeing that there was no remedy, the castle being so strong; and Don Gonzalo was buried in the monastery of Ona, according as he had appointed in his will; and the Infante Don Sancho with his forefathers, the kings of Navarre, in the royal monastery of Naxara.

Greatly was King Don Alfonso troubled at this villainy, and he sent for the Cid, who was in those parts; and the Cid came to him with a great company. And the king told him the great treason which had been committed, and took the Cid into his favor, and said unto him that he might return with him into Castile. My Cid thanked him for his bounty, but he said he never would accept his favor unless the king granted what he should request; and the king bade him make his demand. And my Cid demanded, that when any hidalgo should be banished, in time to come, he should have the thirty days, which were his right, allowed him, and not nine only, as had been his case; and that neither hidalgo nor citizen should be proceeded against till they had been fairly and lawfully heard; also, that the king should not go against the privileges and charters and good customs of any town or other place, nor impose taxes upon them against their right; and if he did, that it should be lawful for the land to rise against him, till he had amended the misdeed. And to all this the king accorded, and said to my Cid that he should go back into Castile with him; but my Cid said he would not go into Castile till he had won that castle of Rueda, and delivered the villainous Moors thereof into his hands, that he might do justice upon them. So the king thanked him greatly, and re-

turned into Castile, and my Cid remained before the castle of Rueda. And he lay before it so long, and beset it so close, that the food of the Moors failed, and they had no strength to defend themselves; and they would willingly have yielded the castle, so they might have been permitted to leave it and go whither they would; but he would have their bodies, to deliver them up to the king. When they saw that it must be so, great part of them came out, and yielded themselves prisoners; and then my Cid stormed the castle, and took Almofalez and they who held with him, so that none escaped, and he sent him and his accomplices in the treason to the king. And the king was right glad when they were brought before him, and he did great justice upon them, and sent to thank my Cid for having avenged him.

After my Cid had done this good service to king Don Alfonso, he and King Zulema of Zaragoza entered Aragon, slaying, and burning, and plundering before them, and they returned to the castle of Monzon with great booty. Then the Cid went into King Abenalfange's country, and did much mischief there; and he got among the mountains of Moriella, and beat down everything before him, and destroyed the castle of Moriella. And King Zulema sent to bid him build up the ruined castle of Alcala, which is upon Moriella; and the Cid did so. But King Abenalfange being sorely grieved hereat, sent to King Pedro of Aragon, and besought him to come and help him against the Campeador. And the king of Aragon gathered together a great host in his anger, and he and the king of Denia came against my Cid, and they halted that night upon the banks of the Ebro; and King

THE CID AIDS HIS KING

Don Pedro sent letters to the Cid, bidding him leave the castle which he was then edifying. My Cid made answer, that if the king chose to pass that way in peace, he would let him pass, and show him any service in his power. And when the king of Aragon saw that he would not forsake the work, he marched against him, and attacked him. Then was there a brave battle, and many were slain; but my Cid won the day, and King Abenalfange fled, and King Don Pedro was taken prisoner, and many of his counts and knights with him. My Cid returned to Zaragoza with this great honor, taking his prisoners with him; and he set them all freely at liberty, and having tarried in Zaragoza a few days, set forth for Castile, with great riches and full of honors.

Having done all these things in his banishment, my Cid returned to Castile, and the king received him well and gave him the castle of Dueñas, and of Orcejon, and Ybia, and Campo, and Gaña, and Berviesca, and Berlanga, with all their districts. And he gave him privileges with leaden seals appendant, and confirmed with his own hand, that whatever castles, towns, and places he might win from the Moors, or from any one else, should be his own, quit and free forever, both for him and for his descendants. Thus was my Cid received into the king's favor, and he abode with him long time, doing him great services, as his lord.

HOW THE CID MADE A COWARD INTO A BRAVE MAN

Adapted by Robert Southey

AT this time Martin Pelaez the Asturian came with a convoy of laden beasts, carrying provisions to the host of the Cid; and as he passed near the town the Moors sallied out in great numbers against him; but he, though he had few with him, defended the convoy right well, and did great hurt to the Moors, slaying many of them, and drove them into the town. This Martin Pelaez who is here spoken of, did the Cid make a right good knight, of a coward, as ye shall hear. When the Cid first began to lay siege to the city of Valencia, this Martin Pelaez came unto him; he was a knight, a native of Santillana in Asturias, a hidalgo, great of body and strong of limb, a well-made man and of goodly semblance, but withal a right coward at heart, which he had shown in many places when he was among feats of arms. And the Cid was sorry when he came unto him, though he would not let him perceive this; for he knew he was not fit to be of his company. Howbeit he thought that since he was come, he would make him brave, whether he would or not. And when the Cid began to war upon the town, and sent parties against it twice and thrice a day, as ye have heard, for the Cid was alway upon the alert, there was fighting and tourneying every day. One day it fell

out that the Cid and his kinsmen and friends and vassals were engaged in a great encounter, and this Martin Pelaez was well armed; and when he saw that the Moors and Christians were at it, he fled and betook himself to his lodging, and there hid himself till the Cid returned to dinner. And the Cid saw what Martin Pelaez did, and when he had conquered the Moors he returned to his lodging to dinner. Now it was the custom of the Cid to eat at a high table, seated on his bench, at the head. And Don Alvar Fañez, and Pero Bermudez, and other precious knights, ate in another part, at high tables, full honorably, and none other knights whatsoever dared take their seats with them, unless they were such as deserved to be there; and the others who were not so approved in arms ate upon *estrados*, at tables with cushions. This was the order in the house of the Cid, and every one knew the place where he was to sit at meat, and every one strove all he could to gain the honor of sitting to eat at the table of Don Alvar Fañez and his companions, by strenuously behaving himself in all feats of arms; and thus the honor of the Cid was advanced. This Martin Pelaez, thinking that none had seen his badness, washed his hands in turn with the other knights, and would have taken his place among them. And the Cid went unto him, and took him by the hand and said, You are not such a one as deserves to sit with these, for they are worth more than you or than me; but I will have you with me: and he seated him with himself at table. And he, for lack of understanding, thought that the Cid did this to honor him above all the others. On the morrow the Cid and his company rode towards

Valencia, and the Moors came out to the tourney; and Martin Pelaez went out well armed, and was among the foremost who charged the Moors, and when he was in among them he turned the reins, and went back to his lodging; and the Cid took heed to all that he did, and saw that though he had done badly he had done better than the first day. And when the Cid had driven the Moors into the town he returned to his lodging, and as he sat down to meat he took this Martin Pelaez by the hand, and seated him with himself, and bade him eat with him in the same dish, for he had deserved more that day than he had the first. And the knight gave heed to that saying, and was abashed; howbeit he did as the Cid commanded him: and after he had dined he went to his lodging and began to think upon what the Cid had said unto him, and perceived that he had seen all the baseness which he had done; and then he understood that for this cause he would not let him sit at board with the other knights who were precious in arms, but had seated him with himself, more to affront him than to do him honor, for there were other knights there better than he, and he did not show them that honor. Then resolved he in his heart to do better than he had done heretofore. Another day the Cid and his company and Martin Pelaez rode toward Valencia, and the Moors came out to the tourney full resolutely, and Martin Pelaez was among the first, and charged them right boldly; and he smote down and slew presently a good knight, and he lost there all the bad fear which he had had, and was that day one of the best knights there: and as long as the tourney lasted there he remained, smiting and slaying

and overthrowing the Moors, till they were driven within the gates, in such manner that the Moors marveled at him, and asked where that devil came from, for they had never seen him before. And the Cid was in a place where he could see all that was going on, and he gave good heed to him, and had great pleasure in beholding him, to see how well he had forgotten the great fear which he was wont to have. And when the Moors were shut up within the town, the Cid and all his people returned to their lodging, and Martin Pelaez full leisurely and quietly went to his lodging also, like a good knight. And when it was the hour of eating, the Cid waited for Martin Pelaez; and when he came, and they had washed, the Cid took him by the hand and said, My friend, you are not such a one as deserves to sit with me from henceforth, but sit you here with Don Alvar Fañez, and with these other good knights, for the good feats which you have done this day have made you a companion for them; and from that day forward he was placed in the company of the good. And the history saith that from that day forward this knight Martin Pelaez was a right good one, and a right valiant, and a right precious, in all places where he chanced among feats of arms, and he lived alway with the Cid, and served him right well and truly. And the history saith, that after the Cid had won the city of Valencia, on the day when they conquered and discomfited the king of Seville, this Martin Pelaez was so good a one, that setting aside the body of the Cid himself, there was no such good knight there, nor one who bore such part, as well in the battle as in the pursuit. And so great was the mortality

which he made among the Moors that day, that when he returned from the business the sleeves of his mail were clotted with blood, up to the elbow; insomuch that for what he did that day his name is written in this history, that it may never die. And when the Cid saw him come in that guise, he did him great honor, such as he never had done to any knight before that day, and from thenceforward gave him a place in all his actions and in all his secrets, and he was his great friend. In this knight Martin Pelaez was fulfilled the example which saith, that he who betaketh himself to a good tree, hath good shade, and he who serves a good lord winneth good guerdon; for by reason of the good service which he did the Cid, he came to such good state that he was spoken of as ye have heard: for the Cid knew how to make a good knight, as a good groom knows how to make a good horse.

HOW THE CID RULED VALENCIA

Adapted by Robert Southey

ON the following day after the Christians had taken possession of the town, the Cid entered it with a great company, and he ascended the highest tower of the wall and beheld all the city; and the Moors came unto him, and kissed his hand, saying he was welcome. And the Cid did great honor unto them. And then he gave order that all the windows of the towers which looked in upon the town should be closed up, that the Christians might not see what the Moors did in their houses; and the Moors thanked him for this greatly. And he commanded and requested the Christians that they should show great honor to the Moors, and respect them, and greet them when they met: and the Moors thanked the Cid greatly for the honor which the Christians did them, saying that they had never seen so good a man, nor one so honorable, nor one who had his people under such obedience.

Now Abeniaf thought to have the love of the Cid; and calling to mind the wrath with which he had formerly been received, because he had not taken a gift with him, he took now great riches which he had taken from those who sold bread for so great a price during the siege of Valencia, and this he carried to the Cid as a present. Among those who had sold it were some men from the islands of Majorca, and he took from them all that they

had. This the Cid knew, and he would not accept his gifts. And the Cid caused proclamation to be made in the town and throughout the whole district thereof, that the honorable men and knights and castellans should assemble together in the garden of Villa Nueva, where the Cid at that time sojourned. And when they were all assembled, he went out unto them, to a place which was made ready with carpets and with mats, and he made them take their seats before him full honorably, and began to speak unto them, saying, I am a man who have never possessed a kingdom, neither I nor any man of my lineage. But the day when I first beheld this city I was well pleased therewith, and coveted it that I might be its lord; and I besought the Lord our God that he would give it me. See now what his power is, for the day when I sat down before Juballa I had no more than four loaves of bread, and now by God's mercy I have won Valencia. And if I administer right and justice here, God will let me enjoy it; but if I do evil, and demean myself proudly and wrongfully, I know that he will take it away. Now then, let every one go to his own lands, and possess them even as he was wont to have and to hold them. He who shall find his field, or his vineyard, or his garden, desert, let him incontinently enter thereon; and he who shall find his husbanded, let him pay him that hath cultivated it the cost of his labor, and of the seed which he hath sown therein, and remain with his heritage, according to the law of the Moors. Moreover, I have given order that they who collect my dues take from you no more than the tenth, because so it is appointed by the custom of the Moors, and it is what ye have been wont

to pay. And I have resolved in my heart to hear your complaints two days in the week, on the Monday and the Thursday; but if causes should arise which require haste, come to me when ye will and I will give judgment, for I do not retire with women to sing and to drink, as your lords have done, so that ye could obtain no justice, but will myself see to these things, and watch over ye as friend over his friend, and kinsman over his kinsman. And I will be Cadi and Guazil, and when dispute happens among ye I will decide it. When he had said these things, they all replied that they prayed God to preserve him through long and happy years; and four of the most honorable among them rose and kissed his hands, and the Cid bade them take their seats again.

Then the Cid spake unto them and said, It is told me that Abeniaf hath done much evil, and committed great wrong toward some of ye, in that he hath taken great riches from ye to present them to me, saying, that this he did because ye sold food for a great price during the siege. But I will accept of no such gift; for if I were minded to have your riches, I could take them, and need not ask them neither from him, nor from any other; but thing so unseemly as to take that which is his from any one, without just cause, I will not do. They who have gotten wealth thus, God hath given it them; let them go to Abeniaf, and take back what he hath forced from them, for I will order him to restore the whole. Then he said, Ye see the riches which I took from the messengers who went to Murcia; it is mine by right, for I took it in war because they brake the covenant which they had made, and would have deceived me: nevertheless I will restore it to

the uttermost farthing, that nothing thereof shall be lost. And ye shall do homage to me that ye will not withdraw yourselves, but will abide here, and do my bidding in all things, and never depart from the covenant which ye make with me; for I love ye, and am grieved to think of the great evil and misery which ye endured from the great famine, and of the mortality which there was. And if ye had done that before which ye have done now, ye would not have been brought to these sufferings and have bought the *cafiz* of wheat at a thousand *maravedis;* but I trust in God to bring it to one *maravedi*. Be ye now secure in your lands, and till your fields, and rear cattle; for I have given order to my men that they offer ye no wrong, neither enter into the town to buy nor to sell; but that they carry on all their dealings in Alcudia, and this I do that ye may receive no displeasure. Moreover I command them not to take any captive into the town, but if this should be done, lay ye hands on the captive and set him free, without fear, and if any one should resist, kill him and fear not. I myself will not enter your city nor dwell therein, but I will build me a place beside the bridge of Alcantara, where I may go and disport myself at times, and repair when it is needful. When he had said these things he bade them go their way.

Well pleased were the Moors when they departed from him, and they marveled at the greatness of his promises, and they set their hearts at rest, and put away the fear which they had had, thinking all their troubles were over; for in all the promises which the Cid had made unto them, they believed that he spake truth; but he said these things only to quiet them, and to make them come to

what he wished, even as came to pass. And when he had done, he sent his Almoxarife, Abdalla Adiz, to the custom house, and made him appoint men to collect the rents of the town for him, which was done accordingly. And when the Cid had given order concerning his own affairs at his pleasure, the Moors would fain have entered again into possession of their heritages as he told them; but they found it all otherwise, for of all the fields which the Christians had husbanded, they would not yield up one; albeit they let them enter upon such as were left waste: some said that the Cid had given them the lands that year, instead of their pay, and other some that they rented them and had paid rent for the year. So the Moors, seeing this, waited till Thursday, when the Cid was to hear complaints, as he had said unto them. When Thursday came all the honorable men went to the garden, but the Cid sent to say unto them that he could not come out that day, because of other causes which he had to determine; and he desired that they would go their way for that time, and come again on the Monday: this was to show his mastery. And when it was Monday they assembled again in the garden, and the Cid came out to them, and took his seat upon the *estrado*, and the Moors made their complaint. And when he had heard them he began to make similitudes, and offer reasons which were not like those which he had spoken the first day; for he said to them, I ask of ye, whether it is well that I should be left without men? or if I were without them, I should be like unto one who hath lost his right arm, or to a bird that hath no wings, or to one who should do battle and hath neither spear nor sword. The first thing which I have

to look to is to the well-being of my people, that they may live in wealth and honor, so that they may be able to serve me, and defend my honor: for since it has pleased God to give me the city of Valencia, I will not that there be any other lord here than me. Therefore I say unto you and command you, if you would be well with me, and would that I should show favor unto you, that ye see how to deliver that traitor Abeniaf into my hands. Ye all know the great treason which he committed upon King Yahia, his lord and yours, how he slew him, and the misery which he brought upon you in the siege; and since it is not fitting that a traitor who hath slain his lord should live among you, and that his treason should be confounded with your loyalty, see to the obeyment of my command.

When the honorable Moors heard this, they were dismayed; verily they knew that he spake truth touching the death of the king, but it troubled them that he departed from the promise which he had made; and they made answer that they would take counsel concerning what he had said, and then reply. Then five of the best and most honorable among them withdrew, and went to Abdalla Adiz, and said unto him, Areed us thy reed now the best and truest that thou canst, for thou art of our law, and oughtest to do this: and the reason why we ask counsel of thee is this. The Cid promised us many things, and now behold he says nothing to us of what he said before, but moveth other new reasons, at which great dismay hath seized us. And because thou better knowest his ways, tell us now what is his pleasure, for albeit we might wish to do otherwise; this is not a time wherein

anything but what he shall command can be done. When the Almoxarife heard this he made answer, Good men, it is easy to understand what he would have, and to do what should be done. We all know the great treason which Abeniaf committed against ye all in killing your lord the king; for albeit at that time ye felt the burden of the Christians, yet was it nothing so great as after he had killed him, neither did ye suffer such misery. And since God hath brought him who was the cause to this state, see now by all means how ye may deliver him into the hands of the Cid. And fear not, neither take thought for the rest; for though the Cid may do his pleasure in some things, better is it to have him for lord than this traitor who hath brought so much evil upon ye. Moreover the things of this world soon pass away, and my heart tells me that we shall ere long come out of the bondage of the Cid, and of the Christians; for the Cid is well-nigh at the full of his days, and we who remain alive after his death shall then be masters of our city. When the good men heard what he said, they thanked him much, and held themselves to be well advised, and said that they would do willingly what he bade them; and they returned forthwith to the Cid, and said unto him that they would fulfill his commandment. Incontinently did the good men dispeed themselves of the Cid, and they went into the city, and gathered together a great posse of armed men, and went to the place where Abeniaf dwelt; and they assaulted the house and brake the doors, and entered in and laid hands on him, and his son, and all his company, and carried them before the Cid. And the Cid ordered Abeniaf to be cast into prison.

and all those who had taken counsel with him for the death of King Yahia.

When this was done, the Cid said unto the good men, Now that ye have fulfilled my bidding, I hold it good to show favor unto you in that which ye yourselves shall understand to be fitting for me to grant. Say therefore what ye would have, and I will do that which I think behooveth me: but in this manner, that my dwelling-place be within the city of Valencia, in the Alcazar, and that my Christian men have all the fortresses in the city. And when the good men heard this, they were greatly troubled; howbeit they dissembled the sorrow which they resented, and said unto him, Sir Cid, order it as you think good, and we consent thereto. Then said he unto them that he would observe towards them all the uses and customs of their law, and that he would have the power, and be lord of all; and they should till their fields and feed their flocks and herds, and give him his tenth, and he would take no more. When the Moors heard this they were well pleased; and since they were to remain in the town, and in their houses and their inheritances, and with their uses and customs, and that their mosques were to be left them, they held themselves not to be badly off. Then they asked the Cid to let their Guazil be the same as he had first appointed, and that he would give them for their Cadi the Alfaqui Alhagi, and let him appoint whom he would to assist him in distributing justice to the Moors; and thus he himself would be relieved of the wearisomeness of hearing them, save only when any great occasion might befall. This Alhagi was he who made the lamentation for Valencia, as ye have

heard; and when the Cid was peaceably established in Valencia, he was converted, and the Cid made him a Christian. And the Cid granted this which they required, and they kissed his hand, and returned into the town. Nine months did the Cid hold Valencia besieged, and at the end of that time it fell into his power, and he obtained possession of the walls, as ye have heard. And one month he was practicing with the Moors that he might keep them quiet, till Abeniaf was delivered into his hands; and thus ten months were fulfilled, and they were fulfilled on Thursday, the last day of June, in the year of the æra one thousand one hundred and thirty and one, which was in the year one thousand ninety and three of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. And when the Cid had finished all his dealings with the Moors, on this day he took horse with all his company in good array, his banner being carried before him, and his arms behind; and in this guise, with great rejoicings he entered the city of Valencia. And he alighted at the Alcazar, and gave order to lodge all his men round about it; and he bade them plant his banner upon the highest tower of the Alcazar. Glad was the Campeador, and all they who were with him, when they saw his banner planted in that place. And from that day forth was the Cid possessed of all the castles and fortresses which were in the kingdom of Valencia, and established in what God had given him, and he and all his people rejoiced.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE CID'S TWO DAUGHTERS TO THE INFANTES OF CARRION

Adapted by Robert Southey

WHEN the Infantes of Carrion, Diego Gonzalez and Ferrando Gonzalez, saw the noble present which the Cid had sent unto the king, and heard how his riches and power daily increased, and thought what his wealth must needs be when he had given those horses out of the fifth of one battle, and moreover that he was lord of Valencia, they spake one with the other, and agreed, that if the Cid would give them his daughters to wife, they should be well married, and become rich and honorable. And they agreed together that they would talk with the king in private upon this matter. And they went presently to him, and said, Sir, we beseech you of your bounty to help us in a thing which will be to your honor; for we are your vassals, and the richer we are the better able shall we be to serve you. And the king asked of them what it was they would have, and they then told him their desire. And the king thought upon it awhile, and then came to them, and said, Infantes, this thing which you ask lies not in me, but in the Cid; for it is in his power to marry his daughters, and peradventure he will not do it as yet. Nevertheless, that ye may not fail for want of my help, I will send to tell him what ye wish. Then they

kissed his hand for this favor. And the king sent for Alvar Fañez and Pero Bermudez, and went apart with them, and praised the Cid, and thanked him for the good-will which he had to do him service, and said that he had great desire to see him. Say to him, he said, that I beseech him to come and meet me, for I would speak with him concerning something which is to his good and honor. Diego and Ferrando, the Infantes of Carrion, have said unto me that they would fain wed with his daughters, if it seemeth good to him; and methinks this would be a good marriage. When Alvar Fañez and Pero Bermudez heard this, they answered the king, and said, Certain we are, sir, that neither in this, nor in anything else will the Cid do aught but what you, sir, shall command or advise. When ye have your meeting, ye will agree concerning it as is best. Then they kissed his hand, and took their leave.

On the morrow the messengers of the Cid departed from Valladolid, and took their way towards Valencia; and when the Cid knew that they were nigh at hand he went out to meet them, and when he saw them he waxed joyful; and he embraced them, and asked what tidings of his Lord Alfonso. And they told him how they had sped, and how greatly the king loved him; and when we departed, said they, he bade us beseech you to come and meet him anywhere where you will appoint, for he desireth to speak with you, concerning the marriage of your daughters with the Infantes of Carrion, if it should please you so to bestow them: now by what the king said, it seemeth unto us that this marriage pleaseth him. And when the Cid heard this he became thoughtful, and he

said to them after awhile, What think ye of this marriage? And they answered him, Even as it shall please you. And he said to them, I was banished from my own country, and was dishonored, and with hard labor gained I what I have got; and now I stand in the king's favor, and he asketh of me my daughters for the Infantes of Carrion. They are of high blood and full orgulous, and I have no liking to this match; but if our lord the king adviseth it we can do no otherwise: we will talk of this, and God send it for the best. So they entered Valencia, and the Cid spake with Doña Ximena touching this matter, and when she heard it it did not please her; nevertheless she said, if the king thought it good they could do no otherwise. Then the Cid gave order to write letters to the king, saying, that he would meet the king as he commanded, and whatever the king wished that he would do. And he sealed the letters well, and sent two knights with them. And when the king saw the letters he was well pleased, and sent others to say that the time of their meeting should be three weeks after he received these letters, and the place appointed was upon the Tagus, which is a great river.

Now began they to prepare on both sides for this meeting. He who should relate to you the great preparations, and the great nobleness which were made for the nonce, would have much to recount. Who ever saw in Castile so many a precious mule, and so many a good-going palfrey, and so many great horses, and so many goodly streamers set upon goodly spears, and shields adorned with gold and with silver, and mantles, and skins, and rich sendals of Adria? The king sent great

store of food to the banks of the Tagus, where the place of meeting was appointed. Glad were the Infantes of Carrion, and richly did they bedight themselves; some things they paid for, and some they went in debt for: great was their company, and with the king there were many Leonese and Galegos, and Castilians out of number. My Cid the Campeador made no tarriance in Valencia; he made ready for the meeting: there was many a great mule, and many a palfrey, and many a good horse, and many a goodly suit of arms, cloaks, and mantles both of cloth and of peltry; . . . great and little are all clad in colors. Alvar Fañez Minaya, and Pero Bermudez, and Martin Munoz, and Martin Antolinez that worthy Burgalese, and the Bishop Don Hieronymo that good one with the shaven crown, and Alvar Alvarez, and Alvar Salvadores, and Muño Gustios that knight of prowess, and Galind Garcia of Aragon; all these and all the others made ready to go with the Cid. But he bade Alvar Salvadores and Galind Garcia, and all those who were under them, remain and look with heart and soul to the safety of Valencia, and not open the gates of the Alcazar neither by day nor by night, for his wife and daughters were there, in whom he had his heart and soul, and the other ladies with them; he, like a good husband, gave order that not one of them should stir out of the Alcazar till he returned. Then they left Valencia and pricked on more than apace; more than a thousand knights, all ready for war, were in this company. All those great horses that paced so well and were so soft of foot, my Cid won; they were not given to him.

King Don Alfonso arrived first by one day at the place of meeting, and when he heard that the Cid was at hand, he went out with all his honorable men, more than a long league to meet him. When he who was born in a good hour had his eye upon the king, he bade his company halt, and with fifteen of the knights whom he loved best he alighted, and put his hands and his knees to the ground, and took the herbs of the field between his teeth, as if he would have eaten them, weeping for great joy; . . . thus did he know how to humble himself before Alfonso his lord; and in this manner he approached his feet and would have kissed them. And the king drew back and said, The hand, Cid Campeador, not the foot! And the Cid drew nigh upon his knees and besought grace, saying, In this guise grant me your love, so that all present may hear. And the king said that he forgave him, and granted him his love with his heart and soul. And the Cid kissed both his hands, being still upon his knees; and the king embraced him, and gave him the kiss of peace. Well pleased were all they who beheld this, save only Alvar Diez and Garcia Ordoñez, for they did not love the Cid. Then went they all toward the town, the king and the Cid talking together by the way. And the Cid asked the king to eat with him, and the king answered, Not so, for ye are not prepared; we arrived yesterday, and ye but now. Eat you and your company therefore with me, for we have made ready. To-day, Cid Campeador, you are my guest, and to-morrow we will do as pleases you. Now came the Infantes of Carrion up and humbled themselves before the Cid, and he received them well, and they promised to do him service. And the

company of the Cid came up, and kissed the king's hand. So they alighted and went to meat; and the king said unto the Cid that he should eat with him at his table; howbeit he would not. And when the king saw that he would not take his seat with him, he ordered a high table to be placed for the Cid and for Count Don Gonzalo, the father of the Infantes of Carrion. All the while that they ate the king could never look enough at the Cid, and he marveled greatly at his beard, that it had grown to such length. And when they had eaten they were merry, and took their pleasure. And on the morrow the king and all they who went with him to this meeting, ate with the Cid; and so well did he prepare for them that all were full joyful, and agreed in one thing, that they had not eaten better for three years. There was not a man there who did not eat upon silver, and the king and the chief persons ate upon dishes and trenchers of gold. And when the Infantes saw this, they had the marriage more at heart than before.

On the morrow as soon as it was day, the Bishop Don Hieronymo sung mass before the king, in the oratory of the Cid; and when it was over, the king said before all who were there assembled, Counts and Infanzones and knights, hear what I shall say unto the Cid. Cid Ruydiez, the reason wherefore I sent for you to this meeting was twofold: first, that I might see you, which I greatly desired; for I love you much because of the many and great services which you have done me, albeit that at one time I was wroth against you and banished you from the land. But you so demeaned yourself that you never did me disservice, but contrariwise, great ser-

vice both to God and to me and have won Valencia, and enlarged Christendom; wherefore I am bound to show favor unto you and to love you alway. The second reason was that I might ask you for your two daughters, Doña Elvira and Doña Sol, that you would give them in marriage to the Infantes of Carrion, for this methinks would be a fit marriage, and to your honor and good. When the Cid heard this, he was in a manner bound to consent, having them thus demanded from him; and he answered and said, Sir, my daughters are of tender years and if it might please you, they are yet too young for marriage. I do not say this as if the Infantes of Carrion were not worthy to match with them, and with better than they. And the king bade him make no excuse, saying that he should esteem himself well served if he gave his consent. Then the Cid said, Sir, I begat them, and you give them in marriage; both I and they are yours; . . . give them to whom you please, and I am pleased therewith. When the king heard this he was well pleased, and he bade the Infantes kiss the hand of the Cid Campeador, and incontinently they changed swords before the king, and they did homage to him, as sons-in-law to their father-in-law. Then the king turned to the Cid, and said, I thank thee, Ruydiez, that thou hast given me thy daughters for the Infantes of Carrion: and here I give them to the Infantes to be their brides; I give them and not you, and I pray God that it may please him, and that you also may have great joy herein. The Infantes I put into your hands: they will go with you, and I shall return from hence; and I order that three hundred marks of silver be given to them for their

marriage, and they and your daughters will all be your children.

Eight days this meeting lasted; the one day they dined with the king, and the other with the Cid. Then was it appointed that on the morrow at sunrise every one should depart to his own home. My Cid then began to give to every one who would take his gifts, many a great mule, and many a good palfrey, and many a rich garment, . . . every one had what he asked, . . . he said no to none. Threescore horses did my Cid give away in gifts; well pleased were all they who went to that meeting. And now they were about to separate, for it was night. The king took the Infantes by the hand, and delivered them into the power of my Cid the Campeador, . . . See here your sons: from this day, Campeador, you will know what to make of them. And the Cid answered, Sir, may it please you, seeing it is you who have made this marriage for my daughters, to appoint some one to whom I may deliver them, and who may give them, as from your hand, to the Infantes. And the king called for Alvar Fañez Minaya, and said, You are sib to the damsels: I command you, when you come to Valencia, to take them with your own hands, and give them to the Infantes, as I should do if that I were there present: and be you the bride's father. Then said the Cid, Sir, you must accept something from me at this meeting. I bring for you twenty palfreys, these that are gayly trapped, and thirty horses fleet of foot, these that are well caparisoned, . . . take them, and I kiss your hand. Greatly have you bound me, said King Don Alfonso; I receive this gift, and God and all saints grant

that it may well be requited; if I live, you shall have something from me. Then my Cid sprung up upon his horse Bavieca, and he said, Here I say before my lord the king, that if any will go with me to the wedding, I think they will get something by it! and he besought the king that he would let as many go with him as were so minded; and the king licensed them accordingly. And when they were about to part, the company that went with the Cid was greater than that which returned with the king. And the Cid kissed the king's hand and dispeeded himself with his favor, and the king returned to Castile.

My Cid went his way toward Valencia, and he appointed Pero Bermudez and Muño Gustios, than whom there were no better two in all his household, to keep company with the Infantes of Carrion and be their guard, and he bade them spy out what their conditions were; and this they soon found out. The Count Don Suero Gonzalez went with the Infantes; he was their father's brother, and had been their *Ayo* and bred them up, and badly had he trained them, for he was a man of great words, good of tongue, and of nothing else good; and full scornful and orgulous had he made them, so that the Cid was little pleased with them, and would willingly have broken off the marriage; but he could not, seeing that the king had made it. And when they reached Valencia, the Cid lodged the Infantes in the suburb of Alcudia, where he had formerly lodged himself; and all the company who were come to the marriage were quartered with them. And he went to the Alcazar.

On the morrow the Cid mounted his horse and rode

into Alcudia, and brought the Infantes his sons-in-law from thence with him into the city to the Alcazar, that they might see their brides Doña Elvira and Doña Sol. Doña Ximena had her daughters ready to receive them in full noble garments, for since midnight they had done nothing but prink and prank themselves. Full richly was the Alcazar set out that day, with hangings both above and below, purple and samite, and rich cloth. The Cid entered between the Infantes, and all that noble company went in after them; and they went into the chief hall of the Alcazar, where Doña Ximena was with her daughters; and when they saw the Cid and the Infantes, they rose up and welcomed them right well. And the Cid took his seat upon his bench, with one of the Infantes on one side of him and one on the other, and the other honorable men seated themselves on the *estrados*, each in the place where he ought to be, and which belonged to him; and they remained awhile silent. Then the Cid rose and called for Alvar Fañez and said, Thou knowest what my lord the king commanded; fulfill now his bidding; . . . take thy cousins, and deliver them to the Infantes, for it is the king who gives them in marriage, and not I. And Alvar Fañez arose and took the damsels one in each hand, and delivered them to the Infantes, saying, Diego Gonzalez, and Ferrando Gonzalez, I deliver unto you these damsels, the daughters of the Cid Campeador, by command of King Don Alfonso my lord, even as he commanded. Receive you them as your equal helpmates, as the law of Christ enjoineth. And the Infantes took each his bride by the hand, and went to the Cid and kissed his hand; and the

same did they to their mother, Doña Ximena Gomez: and the Bishop Don Hieronymo espoused them, and they exchanged rings. When this was done, the Cid went and seated himself on the *estrado* with the ladies, he and Doña Ximena in the middle, and beside him he placed Doña Elvira his eldest daughter, and by her, her spouse the Infante Diego Gonzalez; and Doña Sol was seated on the other side, by her mother, and the Infante Ferrando by her. And when they had solaced themselves awhile, the Cid said that now they would go eat, and that the marriage should be performed on the morrow; and he besought and commanded the Bishop Don Hieronymo to perform it in such a manner that no cost should be spared, but that everything should be done so completely, that they who came from Castile to this wedding might alway have something to tell of.

On the morrow they went to the church of St. Mary, and there the Bishop Don Hieronymo sat awaiting them, and he blessed them all four at the altar. Who can tell the great nobleness which the Cid displayed at that wedding, the feasts and the bull-fights, and the throwing at the target, and the throwing canes, and how many joculars were there, and all the sports which are proper at such weddings? As soon as they came out of church they took horse and rode to the Glera; three times did the Cid change his horse that day; seven targets were set up on the morrow, and before they went to dinner all seven were broken. Fifteen days did the feasts at this wedding continue; then all they who had come there to do honor to the Cid took leave of him and of the Infantes. Who can tell the great and noble gifts which the Cid gave to

them, both to great and little, each according to his quality, vessels of gold and silver, rich cloth, cloaks, furs, horses, and money beyond all reckoning, so that all were well pleased. And when it was told in Castile with what gifts they who had been to the wedding were returned, many were they who repented that they had not gone there.

THE TRIAL BY SWORDS

Adapted by Robert Southey

NOW King Alfonso misdoubted the Infantes of Carrion that they would not appear at the time appointed, and therefore he said that he would go to Carrion, and the battle should be fought there. And he took with him the counts whom he had appointed alcaldes, and Pero Bermudez and Martin Antolinez and Muño Gustioz went with the Count Don Remond, to whose charge the king had given them. And on the third day after the Cid departed from Toledo the king set forth for Carrion; but it so chanced that he fell sick upon the road, and could not arrive within the three weeks, so that the term was enlarged to five. And when the king's health was restored he proceeded and reached Carrion, and gave order that the combat should be performed, and appointed the day, and named the plain of Carrion for the place thereof. And the Infantes came there with a great company of all their friends and kindred, for their kinsmen were many and powerful; and they all came with one accord, that if before the battle they could find any cause they would kill the knights of the Cid: nevertheless, though they had determined upon this, they dared not put it in effect, because they stood in fear of the king.

And when the night came of which the morrow was appointed for the combat, they on one side and on the

other kept vigil in the churches, each in that church to which he had the most devotion. Night is passed away, and the dawn is now breaking; and at daybreak a great multitude was assembled in the field, and many Ricos-omes came there for the pleasure which they would have in seeing this battle, and the king sent and commanded the champions to make ready. Moreover he made the two counts his sons-in-law, Don Anrrich and Don Remond, and the other counts and their people, arm themselves and keep the field, that the kinsmen of the Infantes might not make a tumult there. Who can tell the great dole and sorrow of Count Gonzalo Gonzalez for his sons the Infantes of Carrion, because they had to do battle this day! and in the fullness of his heart he cursed the day and the hour in which he was born, for his heart divined the sorrow which he was to have for his children. Great was the multitude which was assembled from all Spain to behold this battle. And there in the field near the lists the champions of the Cid armed themselves on one side, and the Infantes on the other. And Count Don Remond armed the knights of the Cid, and instructed them how to do their devoir, and Count Garci Ordoñez helped arm the Infantes of Carrion and their uncle Suero Gonzalez, and they sent to ask the king of his favor that he would give command that the swords Colada and Tizona should not be used in that combat. But the king would not, and he answered that each must take the best sword and the best arms that he could, save only that the one should not have more than the other. Greatly were they troubled at this reply, and greatly did they fear those good swords, and repent that they had taken them to the Cortes of

Toledo. And from that hour the Infantes and Suero Gonzalez bewrayed in their countenances that they thought ill of what they had done, and happy men would they have thought themselves if they had not committed that great villainy, and he if he had not counseled it; and gladly would they have given all that they had in Carrion so it could now have been undone.

And the king went to the place where the Infantes were arming, and said unto them, If ye feared these swords ye should have said so in the Cortes of Toledo, for that was the place, and not this; . . . there is now nothing to be done but to defend yourselves stoutly, as ye have need, against those with whom ye have to do. Then went he to the knights of the Cid, whom he found armed; and they kissed his hand and said unto him, Sir, the Cid hath left us in your hand, and we beseech you see that no wrong be done us in this place, where the Infantes of Carrion have their party; and by God's mercy we will do ourselves right upon them. And the king bade them have no fear for that. Then their horses were brought, and they crossed the saddles, and mounted, with their shields hanging from the neck; and they took their spears, each of which had its streamer, and with many good men round about they went to the lists; and on the other side the Infantes and Count Suero Gonzalez came up with a great company of their friends and kinsmen and vassals. And the king said with a loud voice, Hear what I say, Infantes of Carrion! . . . this combat I would have had waged in Toledo, but ye said that ye were not ready to perform it there, and therefore I am come to this which is your native place, and have

brought the knights of the Cid with me. They are come here under my safeguard. Let not therefore you nor your kinsmen deceive yourselves, thinking to overpower them by tumult, or in any other way than by fair combat; for whosoever shall begin a tumult, I have given my people orders to cut him in pieces upon the spot, and no inquiry shall be made touching the death of him who shall so have offended. Full sorrowful were the Infantes of Carrion for this command which the king had given. And the king appointed twelve knights who were hidalgos to be true-men and place the combatants in the lists, and show them the bounds at what point they were to win or to be vanquished, and to divide the sun between them. And he went with a wand in his hand, and saw them placed on both sides; then he went out of the lists, and gave command that the people should fall back, and not approach within seven spears' length of the lines of the lists.

Now were the six combatants left alone in the lists, and each of them knew now with whom he had to do battle. And they laced their helmets, and put shield upon the arm, and laid lance in rest. And the knights of my Cid advanced against the Infantes of Carrion, and they on their part against the champions of the Campeador. Each bent down with his face to the saddle-bow, and gave his horse the spur. And they met all six with such a shock, that they who looked on expected to see them all fall dead. Pero Bermudez and Ferrando Gonzalez encountered, and the shield of Pero Bermudez was pierced, but the spear passed through on one side, and hurt him not, and brake in two places; and he

sat firm in his seat. One blow he received, but he gave another; he drove his lance through Ferrando's shield, at his breast, so that nothing availed him. Ferrando's breastplate was threefold; two plates the spear went clean through, and drove the third in before it, with the *velmez* and the shirt, into the breast, near his heart; . . . and the girth and the poitrel of his horse burst, and he and the saddle went together over the horse's heels, and the spear in him, and all thought him dead. Howbeit Ferrando Gonzalez rose, and the blood began to run out of his mouth, and Pero Bermudez drew his sword and went against him; but when he saw the sword Tizona over him, before he received a blow from it, he cried out that he confessed himself conquered, and that what Pero Bermudez had said against him was true. And when Pero Bermudez heard this he stood still, and the twelve true-men came up and heard his confession, and pronounced him vanquished. This Ferrando did thinking to save his life; but the wound which he had got was mortal.

Martin Antolinez and Diego Gonzalez brake their lances on each other, and laid hand upon their swords. Martin Antolinez drew forth Colada, the brightness of which flashed over the whole field, for it was a marvelous sword; and in their strife he dealt him a backhanded blow which sheared off the crown of his helmet, and cut away hood and coif, and the hair of his head and the skin also: this stroke he dealt him with the precious Colada. And Diego Gonzalez was sorely dismayed therewith, and though he had his own sword in his hand he could not for very fear make use of it, but he turned

his horse and fled: and Martin Antolinez went after him, and dealt him another with the flat part of the sword, for he missed him with the edge; and the Infante began to cry out aloud, Great God, help me and save me from that sword! And he rode away as fast as he could, and Martin Antolinez called out after him, Get out, Don Traitor! and drove him out of the lists, and remained conqueror.

Muño Gustioz and Suero Gonzalez dealt each other such strokes with their spears as it was marvelous to behold. And Suero Gonzalez, being a right hardy knight and a strong, and of great courage, struck the shield of Muño Gustioz and pierced it through and through; but the stroke was given aslant, so that it passed on and touched him not. Muño Gustioz lost his stirrups with that stroke, but he presently recovered them, and dealt him such a stroke in return that it went clean through the midst of the shield, and through all his armor, and came out between his ribs, missing the heart; then laying hand on him he wrenched him out of the saddle, and threw him down as he drew the spear out of his body; and the point of the spear and the haft and the streamer all came out red. Then all the beholders thought that he was stricken to death. And Muño Gustioz turned to smite again. But when Gonzalo Ansures his father saw this, he cried out aloud for great ruth which he had for his son, and said, For God's sake do not strike him again, for he is vanquished. And Muño Gustioz, like a man of good understanding, asked the true-men whether he were to be held as conquered for what his father said, and they said not, unless he confirmed it with his own mouth.

And Muño Gustioz turned again to Suero Gonzalez where he lay wounded, and lifted his spear against him; and Suero Gonzalez cried out, Strike me not, for I am vanquished. And the judges said it was enough, and that the combat was at an end.

Then the king entered the lists, and many good knights and hidalgos with him, and he called the twelve true-men, and asked them if the knights of the Cid had aught more to do to prove their accusation; and they made answer that the knights of the Cid had won the field and done their devoir; and all the hidalgos who were there present made answer, that they said true. And King Don Alfonso lifted up his voice and said, Hear me, all ye who are here present: inasmuch as the knights of the Cid have conquered, they have won the cause; and the twelve true-men made answer, that what the king said was the truth, and all the people said the same. And the king gave command to break up the lists, and gave sentence that the Infantes of Carrion and their uncle, Suero Gonzalez, were notorious traitors, and ordered his seneschal to take their arms and horses. And from that day forth their lineage never held up its head, nor was of any worth in Castile; and they and their uncle fled away, having been thus vanquished and put to shame. And thus it was that Carrion fell to the king after the days of Gonzalo Gonzalez, the father of the Infantes. Great was their shame, and the like or worse betide him who abuseth fair lady, and then leaveth her.

THE CID'S LAST VICTORY

Adapted by Robert Southey

THREE days after the Cid had departed King Bucar came into the port of Valencia, and landed with all his power, which was so great that there is not a man in the world who could give account of the Moors whom he brought. And there came with him thirty and six kings, and one Moorish queen, who was a negress, and she brought with her two hundred horsewomen, all negresses like herself, all having their hair shorn save a tuft on the top, and this was in token that they came as if upon a pilgrimage, and to obtain the remission of their sins; and they were all armed in coats of mail and with Turkish bows. King Bucar ordered his tents to be pitched round about Valencia, and Abenalfarax, who wrote this history in Arabic, saith that there were full fifteen thousand tents; and he bade that Moorish negress with her archers to take their station near the city. And on the morrow they began to attack the city, and they fought against it three days strenuously; and the Moors received great loss, for they came blindly up to the walls and were slain there. And the Christians defended themselves right well; and every time that they went upon the walls, they sounded trumpets and tambours, and made great rejoicings, as the Cid had commanded. This continued for eight days or nine, till the companions of the Cid had

made ready everything for their departure, as he had commanded. And King Bucar and his people thought that the Cid dared not come out against them; and they were the more encouraged, and began to think of making bastiles and engines wherewith to combat the city, for certes they weened that the Cid Ruydiez dared not come out against them, seeing that he tarried so long.

All this while the company of the Cid were preparing all things to go into Castile, as he had commanded before his death; and his trusty Gil Diaz did nothing else but labor at this. And the body of the Cid was prepared after this manner: first it was embalmed and anointed as the history hath already recounted, and the virtue of the balsam and myrrh was such that the flesh remained firm and fair, having its natural color, and his countenance as it was wont to be, and the eyes open, and his long beard in order, so that there was not a man who would have thought him dead if he had seen him and not known it. And on the second day after he had departed, Gil Diaz placed the body upon a right noble saddle, and this saddle with the body upon it he put upon a frame; and he dressed the body in a *gambax* of fine sendal, next the skin. And he took two boards and fitted them to the body, one to the breast and the other to the shoulders; these were so hollowed out and fitted that they met at the sides and under the arms, and the hind one came up to the pole, and the other up to the beard; and these boards were fastened into the saddle, so that the body could not move. All this was done by the morning of the twelfth day; and all that day the people of the Cid were busied in making ready their arms, and in loading beasts with all that they

THEN CAME THE BODY OF THE CID WITH AN HUNDRED KNIGHTS

had, so that they left nothing of any price in the whole city of Valencia, save only the empty houses. When it was midnight they took the body of the Cid, fastened to the saddle as it was, and placed it upon his horse Bavieca, and fastened the saddle well; and the body sat so upright and well that it seemed as if he was alive. And it had on painted hose of black and white, so cunningly painted that no man who saw them would have thought but that they were grieves and cuishes, unless he had laid his hand upon them; and they put on it a surcoat of green sendal, having his arms blazoned thereon, and a helmet of parchment, which was cunningly painted that every one might have believed it to be iron; and his shield was hung round his neck, and they placed the sword Tizona in his hand, and they raised his arm, and fastened it up so subtilely that it was a marvel to see how upright he held the sword. And the Bishop Don Hieronymo went on one side of him, and the trusty Gil Diaz on the other, and he led the horse Bavieca, as the Cid had commanded him. And when all this had been made ready, they went out from Valencia at midnight, through the gate of Roseros, which is towards Castile. Pero Bermudez went first with the banner of the Cid, and with him five hundred knights who guarded it, all well appointed. And after these came all the baggage. Then came the body of the Cid, with an hundred knights, all chosen men, and behind them Doña Ximena with all her company, and six hundred knights in the rear. All these went out so silently, and with such a measured pace, that it seemed as if there were only a score. And by the time that they had all gone out it was broad day.

Now Alvar Fañez Minaya had set the host in order, and while the Bishop Don Hieronymo and Gil Diaz led away the body of the Cid, and Doña Ximena, and the baggage, he fell upon the Moors. First he attacked the tents of that Moorish queen the negress, who lay nearest to the city; and this onset was so sudden, that they killed full a hundred and fifty Moors before they had time to take arms or go to horse. But that Moorish negress was so skillful in drawing the Turkish bow, that it was held for a marvel; and it is said that they called her in Arabic *Nugueymat Turya*, which is to say, the Star of the Archers. And she was the first that got on horseback, and with some fifty that were with her, did some hurt to the company of the Cid; but in fine they slew her, and her people fled to the camp. And so great was the uproar and confusion, that few there were who took arms, but instead thereof they turned their backs and fled toward the sea. And when King Bucar and his kings saw this, they were astonished. And it seemed to them that there came against them on the part of the Christians full seventy thousand knights, all as white as snow: and before them a knight of great stature upon a white horse with a bloody cross, who bore in one hand a white banner, and in the other a sword which seemed to be of fire, and he made a great mortality among the Moors who were flying. And King Bucar and the other kings were so greatly dismayed that they never checked the reins till they had ridden into the sea; and the company of the Cid rode after them, smiting and slaying and giving them no respite; and they smote down so many that it was marvelous, for the Moors did not turn their heads to defend

themselves. And when they came to the sea, so great was the press among them to get to the ships, that more than ten thousand died in the water. And of the six and thirty kings, twenty and two were slain. And King Bucar and they who escaped with him hoisted sails and went their way, and never more turned their heads. Then Alvar Fañez and his people, when they had discomfited the Moors, spoiled the field, and the spoil thereof was so great that they could not carry it away. And they loaded camels and horses with the noblest things which they found, and went after the bishop Don Hieronymo and Gil Diaz, who, with the body of the Cid, and Doña Ximena, and the baggage, had gone on till they were clear of the host, and then waited for those who were gone against the Moors. And so great was the spoil of that day, that there was no end to it: and they took up gold, and silver, and other precious things as they rode through the camp, so that the poorest man among the Christians, horseman or on foot, became rich with what he won that day.

THE BURIAL OF THE CID

Adapted by Robert Southey

ON the third day after the coming of King Don Alfonso, they would have interred the body of the Cid; but when the king heard what Doña Ximena had said, that while it was so fair and comely it should not be laid in a coffin, he held that what she said was good. And he sent for the ivory chair which had been carried to the Cortes of Toledo, and gave order that it should be placed on the right of the altar of St. Peter; and he laid a cloth of gold upon it, and upon that placed a cushion covered with a right noble *tartari*, and he ordered a graven tabernacle to be made over the chair, richly wrought with azure and gold, having thereon the blazonry of the kings of Castile and Leon, and the king of Navarre, and the Infante of Aragon, and of the Cid Ruydiez the Campeador. And he himself, and the king of Navarre, and the Infante of Aragon, and the Bishop Don Hieronymo, to do honor to the Cid, helped to take his body from between the two boards, in which it had been fastened at Valencia. And when they had taken it out, the body was so firm that it bent not on either side, and the flesh so firm and comely, that it seemed as if he were yet alive. And the king thought that what they purported to do and had thus begun, might full well be effected. And they clad the body in a full noble *tartari*, and in cloth of

purple, which the Soldan of Persia had sent him, and put him on hose of the same, and set him in his ivory chair; and in his left hand they placed his sword Tizona in its scabbard, and the strings of his mantle in his right. And in this fashion the body of the Cid remained there ten years and more, till it was taken thence, as the history will relate anon. And when his garments waxed old, other good ones were put on.

King Don Alfonso, and the sons-in-law of the Cid, King Don Ramiro of Navarre, and the Infante Don Sancho of Aragon, with all their companies, and all the other honorable men, abode three weeks in St. Pedro de Cardeña, doing honor to the Cid. And the Bishop Don Hieronymo, and the other bishops who came with King Don Alfonso, said every day their masses, and accompanied the body of the Cid there where it was placed, and sprinkled holy water upon it, and incensed it, as is the custom to do over a grave. And after three weeks they who were there assembled began to break up, and depart to their own houses. And of the company of the Cid, some went with the king of Navarre, and other some with the Infante of Aragon; but the greater number, and the most honorable among them, betook themselves to King Don Alfonso, whose natural subjects they were. And Doña Ximena and her companions abode in San Pedro de Cardeña, and Gil Diaz with her, as the Cid had commanded in his testament. And the Bishop Don Hieronymo, and Alvar Fañez Minaya, and Pero Bermudez, remained there also till they had fulfilled all that the Cid Ruydiez had commanded in his testament to be done.

Gil Diaz did his best endeavor to fulfill all that his lord the Cid Ruydiez had commanded him, and to serve Doña Ximena and her companions truly and faithfully; and this he did so well, that she was well pleased with his faithfulness. And Doña Ximena fulfilled all that the Cid had commanded her; and every day she had masses performed for his soul, and appointed many vigils, and gave great alms for the soul of the Cid and of his family. And this was the life which she led, doing good wherever it was needful for the love of God: and she was alway by the body of the Cid, save only at meal times and at night; for then they would not permit her to tarry there, save only when vigils were kept in honor of him. Moreover Gil Diaz took great delight in tending the horse Bavieca, so that there were few days in which he did not lead him to water, and bring him back with his own hand. And from the day in which the dead body of the Cid was taken off his back, never man was suffered to bestride that horse; but he was alway led when they took him to water, and when they brought him back. And Gil Diaz thought it fitting that the race of that good horse should be continued, and he bought two mares for him, the goodliest that could be found; and when they were with foal, he saw that they were well taken care of, and they brought forth the one a male colt and the other a female; and from these the race of this good horse was kept up in Castile, so that there were afterwards many good and precious horses of his race, and peradventure are at this day. And this good horse lived two years and a half after the death of his master the Cid, and then he died also, having lived, according

to the history, full forty years. And Gil Diaz buried him before the gate of the monastery, in the public place, on the right hand; and he planted two elms upon the grave, the one at his head and the other at his feet, and these elms grew and became great trees, and are yet to be seen before the gate of the monastery. And Gil Diaz gave order that when he died they should bury him by that good horse Bavieca, whom he had loved so well.

Four years after the Cid had departed, that noble lady Doña Ximena departed also, she who had been the wife of that noble baron the Cid Ruydiez, the Campeador. At that time Don Garcia Tellez was abbot of the monastery, a right noble monk, and a great hidalgo. And the abbot and Gil Diaz sent for the daughters of the Cid and Doña Ximena to come and honor their mother at her funeral, and to inherit what she had left. Doña Sol, who was the younger, came first, because Aragon is nearer than Navarre, and also because she was a widow; for the Infante Don Sancho, her husband, had departed three years after the death of the Cid, and had left no child. King Don Ramiro soon arrived with the other dame, Queen Doña Elvira his wife, and he brought with him a great company in honor of his wife's mother, and also the Bishop of Pamplona, to do honor to her funeral; and the Infante Don Garcia Ramirez, their son, came with them, being a child of four years old. Moreover, there came friends and kinsmen from all parts. And when they were all assembled they buried the body of Doña Ximena at the feet of the ivory chair on which the Cid was seated; and the Bishop of Pamplona said mass, and the abbot Don Garcia Tellez officiated. And they tar-

ried there seven days, singing many masses, and doing much good for her soul's sake. And in that time the Bishop Don Hieronymo arrived, who abode with King Don Alfonso, and he came to do honor to the body of Doña Ximena; for so soon as he heard that she was departed, he set off, taking long journeys every day. And when the seven days were over, King Don Ramiro and Queen Doña Elvira his wife, and her sister, Doña Sol, set apart rents for the soul of Doña Ximena, and they appointed that Gil Diaz should have them for his life, and that then they should go to the monastery forever: and they ordained certain anniversaries for the souls of the Cid and of Doña Ximena. After this was done they divided between them what Doña Ximena had left, which was a great treasure in gold and in silver, and in costly garments; . . . the one half Queen Doña Elvira took, and Doña Sol the other. And when they had thus divided it, Doña Sol said that all which she had in the world should be for her nephew, the Infante Don Garcia Ramirez, and with the good-will of Queen Elvira his mother she adopted him then to be her son, and she took him with her to Aragon, to the lands which had been given her in dower, and bred him up till he became a young man; and after the death of his father he was made king of Navarre, as may be seen in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Spain. And when all these things were done, they departed each to his own home; and Gil Diaz remained, serving and doing honor to the bodies of his master the Cid and Doña Ximena his mistress.

Now Don Garcia Tellez the abbot, and the trusty

Gil Diaz, were wont every year to make a great festival on the day of the Cid's departure, and on that anniversary they gave food and clothing to the poor, who came from all parts round about. And it came to pass when they made the seventh anniversary, that a great multitude assembled as they were wont to do, and many Moors and Jews came to see the strange manner of the Cid's body. And it was the custom of the abbot Don Garcia Tellez, when they made that anniversary, to make a right noble sermon to the people: and because the multitude which had assembled was so great that the church could not hold them, they went out into the open place before the monastery, and he preached unto them there. And while he was preaching there remained a Jew in the church, who stopped before the body of the Cid, looking at him to see how nobly he was there seated, having his countenance so fair and comely, and his long beard in such goodly order, and his sword Tizona in its scabbard in his left hand, and the strings of his mantle in his right, even in such manner as King Don Alfonso had left him, save only that the garments had been changed, it being now seven years since the body had remained there in that ivory chair. Now there was not a man in the church save this Jew, for all the others were hearing the preachment which the abbot made. And when this Jew perceived that he was alone, he began to think within himself and say, This is the body of that Ruydiez the Cid, whom they say no man in the world ever took by the beard while he lived. . . . I will take him by the beard now, and see what he can do to me. And with that he put forth his hand to pull the

beard of the Cid; . . . but before his hand could reach it, God, who would not suffer this thing to be done, sent his spirit into the body, and the Cid let the strings of his mantle go from his right hand, and laid hand on his sword Tizona, and drew it a full palm's length out of the scabbard. And when the Jew saw this, he fell upon his back for great fear, and began to cry out so loudly, that all they who were without the church heard him, and the abbot broke off his preachment and went into the church to see what it might be. And when they came they found this Jew lying upon his back before the ivory chair, like one dead, for he had ceased to cry out, and had swooned away. And then the abbot Don Garcia Tellez looked at the body of the Cid, and saw that his right hand was upon the hilt of the sword, and that he had drawn it out a full palm's length; and he was greatly amazed. And he called for holy water, and threw it in the face of the Jew, and with that the Jew came to himself. Then the abbot asked him what all this had been, and he told him the whole truth; and he knelt down upon his knees before the abbot, and besought him of his mercy that he would make a Christian of him, because of this great miracle which he had seen, and baptize him in the name of Jesus Christ, for he would live and die in his faith, holding all other to be but error. And the abbot baptized him in the name of the Holy Trinity, and gave him to name Diego Gil. And all who were there present were greatly amazed, and they made a great outcry and great rejoicings to God for this miracle, and for the power which he had shown through the body of the Cid in this manner; for it was plain that what the Jew said was

verily and indeed true, because the posture of the Cid was changed. And from that day forward Diego Gil remained in the monastery as long as he lived, doing service to the body of the Cid.

After that day the body of the Cid remained in the same posture, for they never took his hand off the sword, nor changed his garments more, and thus it remained three years longer, till it had been there ten years in all. And then the nose began to change color. And when the abbot Don Garcia Tellez and Gil Diaz saw this, they weened that it was no longer fitting for the body to remain in that manner. And three bishops from the neighboring provinces met there, and with many masses and vigils, and great honor, they interred the body after this manner. They dug a vault before the altar, beside the grave of Doña Ximena, and vaulted it over with a high arch; and there they placed the body of the Cid, seated as it was in the ivory chair, and in his garments, and with the sword in his hand, and they hung up his shield and his banner upon the walls.

THE PERSIAN HERO

THE CHILDHOOD OF RUSTEM

By Alfred J. Church

THERE was never in the world such a child as Rustem the son of Zal. He was fed with the milk of ten nurses; and when he was weaned, his food was bread and meat, and he ate as much as five men. As for his strength and stature, they were such as never had been seen before or will be seen again.

One day he was sleeping in his chamber when he heard outside his door a great cry that the king's white elephant had broken its chain and was at liberty, and that the inhabitants of the palace were in great danger. In a moment he rushed to seize his grandfather's club, and prepared to go out. The attendants tried to stop him. "We dare not incur your father's rage," they said, "by opening the door. The night is dark; the elephant has broken his chain; and yet you are going out. What folly is this!" Rustem was greatly enraged to be so hindered, and struck the man who spoke so terrible a blow between the head and the nape of the neck, that his head fell off like a ball with which children play. When he turned to the others, they soon made way for him. Then he struck the door with his club, and burst the bolts and bars with a single blow. This done, he laid the club upon his shoulder, and hastened after the elephant. As for his warriors, they were all as afraid of the beast

as a lamb is afraid of a wolf. When the furious beast saw him, it rushed at him, lifting its trunk to strike him. Rustem gave it one blow, for only one was wanted; its legs failed under it and it fell; you had said, so vast was it, that a mountain had fallen. Rustem returned to his chamber and finished his sleep.

The next day Zal, hearing what his son had done, sent for him, and covered him with praises. "My son," he said, "you are yet but a child, and yet there is no one to match you in courage and stature. I have an enterprise for you to conduct. Many years ago my grandfather was sent by the king to take an enchanted fortress which is situated upon Mount Sipend, and was killed by a rock that was thrown upon his head by one of the besieged after he had attacked it in vain for a whole year. After this my father San assembled an army, and marched against the place. But he could never find the way which led to the place. It is, indeed, so well provided that no one need ever leave it to get anything from without. San indeed wandered for years over the deserts looking for the fortress, but was obliged at last to return without having avenged his father's death. Now, my son, it is your turn. Go in disguise; the keepers of the fort will not know you; and when you have made your way into the fortress, destroy the wretches root and branch."

"I will do it," said Rustem.

Zal went on: "Disguise yourself as a camel-driver. Pretend that you are coming in from the desert, and that you have a cargo of salt with you. There is nothing in that country that they value more than salt. Let them

once hear that this is what you are bringing, and great and small will welcome you."

Rustem gladly undertook this business. He hid the great club with which he had slain the white elephant in a load of salt, and he chose a number of companions who were as prudent as they were brave. Their arms also were hidden in loads of salt, and so they approached the fortress.

The keeper of the gate saw them from a distance, and ran to the prince, saying, "A caravan with a number of camel-drivers has arrived. If you ask me for what purpose they have come, I should say that, in my opinion, they have salt to sell."

Accordingly the prince sent a messenger to the master of the caravan, to ask him what his packages contained.

Rustem said, "Go back, and tell your master that I have salt in my packages."

The prince, on receiving this message, in great joy ordered the gate to be thrown open, and Rustem with his camels and their drivers, and the packages which they had with them, all entered the fortress. Rustem was courteously greeted by the prince, and greeted him courteously in return. Then he made his way to the bazaar, taking his camel-drivers with him. The people crowded round him, some with clothing, others with gold and silver; all were eager for his merchandise; and there was not a thought of fear or suspicion in the heart of any one of them. When the night came on, Rustem executed his plan of attack. First, he fell upon the prince and leveled him to the ground with a single blow of his club. There was not a chief in the whole fortress

that could stand before him. Some he struck down with his club, and some with his sword. When the morning came, there was not a single man of all the defenders of the fortress that was not either dead or disabled.

In the middle of the fortress there was a building of stone, with a gate of iron. Rustem gave a blow of his club to the gate, and it flew open before him. Within there was a great vaulted hall, full of gold pieces and pearls. There never was such a sight in the world.

Rustem sent a message to his father to tell him of his victory, and to ask him what he should do.

Zal wrote back to this effect: "I send you herewith two thousand camels to carry away your booty. Load them with all that is precious, and then burn the place with fire."

This Rustem did. He loaded the camels with precious stones, and gold, and costly swords, chains and girdles, pearls and jewels worthy of a king, and Chinese brocades richly embroidered with figures. This done, he set fire to the fortress, and so departed.

All this Rustem did while he was yet a child.

THE SEVEN ADVENTURES OF RUSTEM

By Alfred J. Church

KING Keïkobad died, and his son Kaoüs sat upon his throne. At first he was a moderate and prudent prince; but finding his riches increase, and his armies grow more and more numerous, he began to believe that there was no one equal to him in the whole world, and that he could do what he would. One day as he sat drinking in one of the chambers of his palace, and boasting after his custom, a Genius, disguised as a minstrel, came to the king's chamberlain, and desired to be admitted to the royal presence. "I came," he said, "from the country of the Genii, and I am a sweet singer. Maybe the king, if he were to hear me, would give me a post in his court."

The chamberlain went to the king, and said, "There is a minstrel at the gate; he has a harp in his hand, and his voice is marvelously sweet."

"Bring him up," said the king.

So they brought him in, and gave him a place among the musicians, and commanded that he should give them a trial of his powers. So the minstrel, after playing a prelude on his harp, sang a song of the land of the Genii.

"There is no land in all the world" — this was the substance of his song — "like Mazanderan, the land

of the Genii. All the year round the rose blooms in its gardens and the hyacinth on its hills. It knows no heat nor cold, only an eternal spring. The nightingales sing in its thicket, and through its valleys wander the deer, and the water of its stream is as the water of roses, delighting the soul with its perfume. Of its treasures there is no end; the whole country is covered with gold and embroidery and jewels. No man can say that he is happy unless he has seen Mazanderan."

When the king heard this song, he immediately conceived the thought of marching against this wonderful country. Turning, therefore, to his warriors, he said: "We are given over to feasting; but the brave must not suffer himself to rest in idleness. I am wealthier and, I doubt not, stronger than all the kings that have gone before me; it becomes me also to surpass them in my achievements. We will conquer the land of Genii."

The warriors of the king were little pleased to hear such talk from his lips. No one ventured to speak, but their hearts were full of trouble and fear, for they had no desire to fight against the Genii.

"We are your subjects, O king," they said, "and will do as you desire." But when they were by themselves, and could speak openly, they said one to another, "What a trouble is this that has come of our prosperous fortune! Unless by good fortune the king forgets in his cups this purpose of his, we and the whole country are lost. Jemshid, whom the Genii and the Peris and the very birds of the air used to obey, never ventured to talk in this fashion of Mazanderan, or to seek war against the Genii; and Feridun, though he was the wisest of kings,

and skillful in all magical arts, never cherished such a plan." So they sat, overwhelmed with anxiety.

At last one of them said, "My friends, there is only one way of escaping from this danger. Let us send a swift dromedary to Zal of the white hair, with this message: 'Though your head be covered with dust, do not stay to wash it, but come.' Perhaps Zal will give the king wise advice, and, telling him that this plan of his is nothing but a counsel of Satan, will persuade him to change his purpose. Otherwise we are lost, small and great."

The nobles listened to this advice, and sent a messenger to Zal, mounted on a swift dromedary.

When Zal heard what had happened, he said, —

"The king is self-willed. He has not yet felt either the cold or the heat of the world. He thinks that all men, great and small, tremble at his sword, and it must needs be that he learn better by experience. However, I will go; I will give him the best advice that I can. If he will be persuaded by me, it will be well; but if not, the way is open, and Rustem shall go with his army." All night long he revolved these matters in his heart. The next morning he went his way, and arrived at the court of the king.

The king received him with all honor, bade him sit by his side, and inquired how he had borne the fatigue of his journey, and of the welfare of Rustem, his son. Then Zal spoke, —

"I have heard, my lord, that you are forming plans against the land of the Genii. Will it please you to listen to me? There have been mighty kings before you, but

never during all my years, which now are many, has any one of them conceived in his heart such a design as this. This land is inhabited by Genii that are skillful in all magical arts. They can lay such bonds upon men that no one is able to hurt them. No sword is keen enough to cut them through; riches and wisdom and valor are alike powerless against them. I implore you, therefore, not to waste your riches, and the riches of your country and the blood of your warriors, on so hopeless an enterprise."

The king answered, "Doubtless it is true that the kings my predecessors never ventured to entertain such a plan. But am I not superior to them in courage, in power, and wealth? Had they such warriors as you, and Rustem your son? Do not think to turn me from my purpose. I will go against the country of these accursed magicians, and verily I will not leave one single soul alive in it, for they are an evil race. If you do not care to come with me, at least refrain from advising me to sit idle upon my throne."

When Zal heard this answer, he said: "You are the king, and we are your slaves. Whatever you ordain is right and just, and it is only by thy good pleasure that we breathe and move. I have said what was in my heart. All that remains now is to obey, and to pray that the Ruler of the world may prosper your counsels."

When he had thus spoken, Zal took leave of the king, and departed for his own country.

The very next day the king set out with his army for the land of the Genii, and, after marching for several days, pitched his tent at the foot of Mount Asprus, and held a great revel all the night long with his chiefs. The

next morning he said, "Choose me two thousand men who will break down the gates of Mazanderan with their clubs. And take care that when you have taken the city you spare neither young nor old, for I will rid the world of these magicians." They did as the king commanded, and in a short space of time the city, which was before the richest and most beautiful in the whole world, was made into a desert.

When the king of Mazanderan heard of these things he called a messenger, and said: "Go to the White Genius and say to him, 'The Persians have come with a great army and are destroying everything. Make haste and help me, or there will be nothing left to preserve.'"

The White Genius said, "Tell the king not to be troubled; I will see to these Persians."

That same night the whole army of King Kaoüs was covered with a wonderful cloud. The sky was dark as pitch, and there fell from it such a terrible storm of hailstones that no one could stand against them. When the next morning came, lo! the king and all that had not fled — for many fled to their own country — or been killed by the hailstones, were blind. Seven days they remained terrified and helpless. On the eighth day they heard the voice, loud as a clap of thunder, of the White Genius.

"King," said he, "you coveted the land of Mazanderan, you entered the city, you slew and took prisoners many of the people; but you did not know what I could do. And now, see, you have your desire. Your lot is of your own contriving."

The White Genius then gave over the king and his

companions to the charge of an army of twelve thousand Genii, and commanded that they should be kept in prison, and have just so much food given them as should keep them alive from day to day. Kaoüs, however, contrived to send by one of his warriors a message to Zal the White-haired, telling him of all the troubles that had come upon him. When Zal heard the news he was cut to the heart, and sent without delay for Rustem. "Rustem," said he, "this is no time for a man to eat and drink and take his pleasure. The king is in the hands of Satan, and we must deliver him. As for me, I am old and feeble; but you are of the age for war. Saddle Raksh, your horse, and set forth without a moment's delay. The White Genius must not escape the punishment of his misdeeds at your hands."

"The way is long," said Rustem; "how shall I go?"

"There are two ways," answered Zal, "and both are difficult and dangerous. The king went by the longer way. The other is by far the shorter, a two weeks' march and no more; but it is full of lions and evil Genii, and it is surrounded by darkness. Still, I would have you go by it. God will be your helper; and difficult as the way may be, it will have an end, and your good horse Raksh will accomplish it. And if it be the will of heaven that you should fall by the hand of the White Genius, who can change the ordering of destiny? Sooner or later we must all depart, and death should be no trouble to him who has filled the earth with his glory."

"My father, I am ready to do your bidding," said Rustem. "Nevertheless, the heroes of old cared not to go of their own accord into the land of death; and it is

only he who is weary of life that throws himself in the way of a roaring lion. Still I go, and I ask for no help but from the justice of God. With that on my side I will break the charm of the magicians. The White Genius himself shall not escape me."

Rustem armed himself, and went on his way.

Rustem made such speed that he accomplished two days' journey in one. But at last, finding himself hungry and weary, and seeing that there were herds of wild asses in the plain which he was traversing, he thought that he would catch one of them for his meal, and rest for the night. So pressing his knees into his horse's side, he pursued one of them. There was no escape for the swiftest beast when Rustem was mounted on Raksh, and in a very short time a wild ass was caught with the lasso. Rustem struck a light with a flint stone, and making a fire with brambles and branches of trees, roasted the ass and ate it for his meal. This done he took the bridle from his horse, let him loose to graze upon the plain, and prepared to sleep himself in a bed of rushes. Now in the middle of this bed of rushes was a lion's lair, and at the end of the first watch the lion came back, and was astonished to see lying asleep on the rushes a man as tall as an elephant, with a horse standing near him. The lion said to himself, "I must first tear the horse, and then the rider will be mine whenever I please." So he leaped at Raksh; but the horse darted at him like a flash of fire, and struck him on the head with his fore feet. Then he seized him by the back with his teeth, and battered him to pieces on the earth. When Rustem awoke and saw the dead lion, which indeed was

of a monstrous size, he said to Raksh, "Wise beast, who bade you fight with a lion? If you had fallen under his claws, how should I have carried to Mazanderan this cuirass and helmet, this lasso, my bow and my sword?" Then he went to sleep again; but awaking at sunrise, saddled Raksh and went on his way.

He had now to accomplish the most difficult part of his journey, across a waterless desert, so hot that the very birds could not live in it. Horse and rider were both dying of thirst, and Rustem, dismounting, could scarcely struggle along while he supported his steps by his spear. When he had almost given up all hope, he saw a well-nourished ram pass by. "Where," said he to himself, "is the reservoir from which this creature drinks?" Accordingly he followed the ram's footsteps, holding his horse's bridle in one hand and his sword in the other, and the ram led him to a spring. Then Rustem lifted up his eyes to heaven and thanked God for His mercies; afterwards he blessed the ram, saying, "No harm come to thee forever! May the grass of the valleys and the desert be always green for thee, and may the bow of him that would hunt thee be broken, for thou hast saved Rustem; verily, without thee he would have been torn to pieces by the wild beasts of the desert."

After this he caught another wild ass, and roasted him for his meal. Then having bathed in the spring, he lay down to sleep; but before he lay down, he said to Raksh, his horse: "Do not seek quarrel or friendship with any. If an enemy come, run to me; and do not fight either with Genius or lion."

After this he slept; and Raksh now grazed, and now galloped about over the plain.

Now it so happened that there was a great dragon that had its bed in this part of the desert. So mighty a beast was it, that not even a Genius had dared to pass by that way. The dragon was astonished to see a man asleep and a horse by his side, and began to make its way to the horse. Raksh did as he had been bidden, and running towards his master, stamped with his feet upon the ground. Rustem awoke, and seeing nothing when he looked about him — for the dragon meanwhile had disappeared — was not a little angry. He rebuked Raksh, and went to sleep again. Then the dragon came once more out of the darkness, and the horse ran with all speed to his master, tearing up the ground and kicking. A second time the sleeper awoke, but as he saw nothing but darkness round him, he was greatly enraged, and said to his faithful horse, —

"Why do you disturb me? If it wearies you to see me asleep, yet you cannot bring the night to an end. I said that if a lion came to attack you, I would protect you; but I did not tell you to trouble me in this way. Verily, if you make such a noise again, I will cut off your head and go on foot, carrying all my arms and armor with me to Mazanderan."

A third time Rustem slept, and a third time the dragon came. This time Raksh, who did not venture to come near his master, fled over the plain; he was equally afraid of the dragon and of Rustem. Still his love for his master did not suffer him to rest. He neighed and tore up the earth, till Rustem woke up

again in a rage. But this time God would not suffer the dragon to hide himself, and Rustem saw him through the darkness, and, drawing his sword, rushed at him.

But first he said, — "Tell me your name; my hand must not tear your soul from your body before I know your name."

The dragon said, — "No man can ever save himself from my claws; I have dwelt in this desert for ages, and the very eagles have not dared to fly across. Tell me then your name, bold man. Unhappy is the mother that bare you."

"I am Rustem, son of Zal of the white hair," said the hero, "and there is nothing on earth that I fear."

Then the dragon threw itself upon Rustem. But the horse Raksh laid back his ears, and began to tear the dragon's back with his teeth, just as a lion might have torn it.

The hero stood astonished for a while; then, drawing his sword, severed the monster's head from his body. Then, having first performed his ablutions, he returned thanks to God, and mounting on Raksh, went his way.

All that day he traveled across the plain, and came at sunset to the land of the magicians. Just as the daylight was disappearing, he spied a delightful spot for his night's encampment. There were trees and grass, and a spring of water. And beside the spring there was a flagon of red wine, and a roast kid, with bread and salt and confectionery neatly arranged. Rustem dismounted, unsaddled his horse, and looked with astonishment at the

provisions thus prepared. It was the meal of certain magicians, who had vanished when they saw him approach.

Of this he knew nothing, but sitting down without question, filled a cup with wine, and taking a harp which he found lying by the side of the flagon, sang: —

> "The scourge of the wicked am I,
> And my days still in battle go by ;
> Not for me is the red wine that glows
> In the reveler's cup, nor the rose
> That blooms in the land of delight ;
> But with monsters and demons to fight."

The music and the voice of the singer reached the ears of a witch that was in those parts. Forthwith, by her art, she made her face as fair as spring, and, approaching Rustem, asked him how he fared, and sat down by his side. The hero thanked heaven that he had thus found in the desert such good fare and excellent company; for he did not know that the lovely visitor was a witch. He welcomed her, and handed her a cup of wine; but, as he handed it, he named the name of God, and at the sound her color changed, and she became as black as charcoal.

When Rustem saw this, quick as the wind he threw his lasso over her head.

"Confess who you are," he cried; "show yourself in your true shape."

Then the witch was changed into a decrepid, wrinkled old woman. Rustem cut her in halves with a blow of his sword.

The next day he continued his journey with all the speed that he could use, and came to a place where it was

utterly dark. Neither sun, nor moon, nor stars could be seen; and all that the hero could do was to let the reins fall on his horse's neck, and ride on as chance might direct.

In time he came to a most delightful country, where the sun was shining brightly, and where the ground was covered with green. Rustem took off his cuirass of leopard skin, and his helmet, and let Raksh find pasture where he could in the fertile fields, and lay down to sleep. When the keeper of the fields saw the horse straying among them and feeding, he was filled with rage; and running up to the hero, dealt him with his stick a great blow upon the feet.

Rustem awoke.

"Son of Satan," said the keeper, "why do you let your horse stray in the corn-fields?"

Rustem leaped upon the man, and without uttering a word good or bad, wrenched his ears from his head.

Now the owner of this fertile country was a young warrior of renown named Aulad. The keeper ran up to him with his ears in his hand, and said, —

"There has come to this place a son of Satan, clad in a cuirass of leopard skin, with an iron helmet. I was going to drive his horse out of the corn-fields, when he leaped upon me, tore my ears from my head without saying a single word, and then lay down to sleep again."

Aulad was about to go hunting with his chiefs; but when he heard the keeper's story he altered his plan, and set out to the place where he heard that Rustem had been seen. Rustem, as soon as he saw him approach, and a great company with him, ran to Raksh, leaped on his

WHEN THE WHITE GENIUS SAW HIM HE RUSHED AT ONCE TO DO BATTLE WITH HIM. FIRST HE CAUGHT UP FROM THE GROUND A STONE AS BIG AS A MILLSTONE AND HURLED IT AT HIM. FOR THE FIRST TIME RUSTEM FELT A THRILL OF FEAR, SO TERRIBLE WAS HIS ENEMY. GATHERING ALL HIS STRENGTH HE STRUCK

back, and rode forward. Aulad said to him, "Who are you? What are you doing here? Why did you pluck off my keeper's ears and let your horse feed in the cornfields?"

"If you were to hear my name," said Rustem, "it would freeze the blood in your heart."

So saying he drew his sword, and fastening his lasso to the bow of his saddle, rushed as a lion rushes into the midst of a herd of oxen. With every blow of his sword he cut off a warrior's head, till the whole of Aulad's company was either slain or scattered. Aulad himself he did not kill, but throwing his lasso, caught him by the neck, dragged him from his horse, and bound his hands. "Now," said he, "if you will tell me the truth, and, without attempting to deceive, will show me where the White Genius dwells, and will guide me to where King Kaoüs is kept prisoner, then I will make you king of Mazanderan. But if you speak a word of falsehood you die."

"It is well," said Aulad; "I will do what you desire. I will show you where the king is imprisoned. It is four hundred miles from this place; and four hundred miles farther, a difficult and dangerous way, is the dwelling of the White Genius. It is a cavern so deep that no mere man has ever sounded it, and it lies between two mountains. Twelve thousand Genii watch it during the night, for the White Genius is the chief and master of all his tribe. You will find him a terrible enemy, and, for all your strong arms and hands, your keen sword, your lance and your club, you will scarcely be able to conquer him; and when you have conquered him, there will still be much to be

done. In the city of the king of Mazanderan there are thousands of warriors, and not a coward among them; and besides these, there are two hundred war-elephants. Were you made of iron, could you venture to deal alone with these sons of Satan?"

Rustem smiled when he heard this, and said, "Come with me, and you will see what a single man, who puts his trust in God, can do. And now show me first the way to the king's prison."

Rustem mounted on Raksh, and rode gayly forward, and Aulad ran in front of him. For a whole day and night he ran, nor ever grew tired, till they reached the foot of Mount Asprus, where King Kaoüs had fallen into the power of the Genii. About midnight they heard a great beating of drums, and saw many fires blaze up.

Rustem said to Aulad, "What mean these fires that are blazing up to right and left of us?"

Aulad answered, "This is the way into Mazanderan. The great Genius Arzeng must be there."

Then Rustem went to sleep; and when he woke in the morning he took his lasso and fastened Aulad to the trunk of a tree. Then hanging his grandfather's club to his saddle-bow, he rode on.

His conflict with Arzeng, the chief of the army of the Genii, was soon finished. As he approached the camp he raised his battle-cry. His shout was loud enough, one would have said, to split the very mountains; and Arzeng when he heard it, rushed out of his tent. Rustem set spurs to his horse, and galloping up to the Genius, caught him by the head, tore it from the body, and threw it into the midst of the army. When the Genii saw it, and

caught sight also of the great club, they fled in the wildest confusion, fathers trampling upon their sons in their eagerness to escape. The hero put the whole herd of them to the sword, and then returned as fast as he could to the place where he had left Aulad bound to the tree. He unloosed the knots of the lasso, and bidding him lead the way to the prison-house of the king, set spurs to Raksh, Aulad running in front as before.

When they entered the town, Raksh neighed. His voice was as loud as thunder, and the king heard it, and in a moment understood all that had happened. "That is the voice of Raksh," he said to the Persians that were with him; "our evil days are over. This was the way in which he neighed in King Kobad's time, when he made war on the Scythians."

The Persians said to themselves, "Our poor king has lost his senses, or he is dreaming. There is no help for us." But they had hardly finished speaking when the hero appeared, and did homage to the king. Kaoüs embraced him, and then said: "If you are to help me, you must go before the Genii know of your coming. So soon as the White Genius shall hear of the fall of Arzeng, he will assemble such an army of his fellows as shall make all your pains and labor lost. But you must know that you have great difficulties to overcome. First, you must cross seven mountains, all of them occupied by troops of Genii; then you will see before you a terrible cavern — more terrible, I have heard say, than any other place in the world. The entrance to it is guarded by warrior Genii, and in it dwells the White Genius himself. He is both the terror and the hope of his army. Conquer him,

and all will be well. A wise physician tells me that the only remedy for my blindness is to drop into my eyes three drops of the White Genius' blood. Go and conquer, if you would save your king."

Without any delay Rustem set forth, Raksh carrying him like the wind. When he reached the great cavern, he said to Aulad, who had guided him on his way as before, "The time of conflict is come. Show me the way."

Aulad answered, "When the sun shall grow hot, the Genii will go to sleep. That will be your time to conquer them."

Rustem waited till the sun was at its highest, and then went forth to battle. The Genii that were on guard fled at the sound of his voice, and he went on without finding any to resist him till he came to the great cavern of which the king had spoken. It was a terrible place to see, and he stood for a while with his sword in his hand, doubting what he should do. No one would choose such a spot for battle; and as for escaping from it, that was beyond all hope. Long he looked into the darkness, and at last he saw a monstrous shape, which seemed to reach across the whole breadth of the cave. It was the White Genius that was lying asleep. Rustem did not attempt to surprise him in his sleep, but woke him by shouting his battle-cry. When the White Genius saw him, he rushed at once to do battle with him. First he caught up from the ground a stone as big as a millstone and hurled it at him. For the first time Rustem felt a thrill of fear, so terrible was his enemy. Nevertheless, gathering all his strength, he struck at him a great blow with his sword and cut off

one of his feet. The monster, though having but one foot, leaped upon him like a wild elephant, and seized him by the breast and arms, hoping to throw him to the ground, and tore from his body great morsels of flesh, so that the whole place was covered with blood. Rustem said to himself, "If I escape to-day I shall live forever;" and the White Genius thought, "Even if I do deliver myself from the claws of this dragon, I shall never see Mazanderan again." Still he did not lose courage, but continued to struggle against the hero with all his might.

So the two fought together, the blood and sweat running from them in great streams. At last Rustem caught the Genius round the body, and, putting out all his strength, hurled him to the ground with such force that his soul was driven out of his body. Then he plunged his poniard into the creature's heart, and tore the liver out of his body. This done he returned to Aulad, whom he had left bound with his lasso, loosed him, and set out for the place where he had left the king. But first Aulad said to him, "I have the marks of your bonds upon me; my body is bruised with the knots of your lasso; I beseech you to respect the promise which you made me of a reward. A hero is bound to keep his word."

Rustem said: "I promised that you should be king of Mazanderan, and king you shall be. But I have much to do before my word can be kept. I have a great battle to fight, in which I may be conquered, and I must rid this country of the magicians with whom it is encumbered. But be sure that, when all is done, I will not fail of the promises which I have made."

So Rustem returned to King Kaoüs, and, dropping

the blood of the White Genius into his eyes, gave him back his sight. Seven days the king and his nobles feasted together, Rustem having the chief place. On the eighth day they set out to clear the country of the accursed race of magicians. When they had done this, the king said, "The guilty have now been punished. Let no others suffer. And now I will send a letter to the king of Mazanderan."

So the king wrote a letter in these words: "You see how God has punished the wrong-doers — how He has brought to naught the Genii and the magicians. Quit then your town, and come here to pay homage and tribute to me. If you will not, then your life shall be as the life of Arzeng and the White Genius."

This letter was carried to the king by a certain chief named Ferbad. When the king had read it, he was greatly troubled. Three days he kept Ferbad as his guest, and then sent back by him this answer: "Shall the water of the sea be equal to wine? Am I one to whom you can say, 'Come down from your throne, and present yourself before me?' Make ready to do battle with me, for verily I will bring upon the land of Persia such destruction that no man shall be able to say what is high and what is low."

Ferbad hastened back to the king of Persia. "The man," he said, "is resolved not to yield." Then the king sent to Rustem. And Rustem said, "Send me with a letter that shall be as keen as a sword and a message like a thunder-cloud." So the king sent for a scribe, who, making the point of his reed as fine as an arrowhead, wrote thus: "These are foolish words, and

do not become a man of sense. Put away your arrogance, and be obedient to my words. If you refuse, I will bring such an army against you as shall cover your land from one sea to the other; and the ghost of the White Genius shall call the vultures to feast on your brains."

The king set his seal to this letter, and Rustem departed with it, with his club hanging to his saddle-bow. When the king of Mazanderan heard of his coming, he sent some of his nobles to meet him. When Rustem saw them, he caught a huge tree that was by the wayside in his hands, twisted it with all his might, and tore it up, roots and all. Then he poised it in his hand as if it were a javelin. One of the nobles, the strongest of them all, rode up to him, caught one of his hands, and pressed it with all his might. Rustem only smiled; but when in his turn he caught the noble's hand in his, he crushed all the veins and bones, so that the man fell fainting from his horse.

When the king heard what had been done, he called one of his warriors, Kalahour by name, the strongest man in his dominions, and said to him, "Go and meet this messenger; show him your prowess, and cover his face with shame." So Kalahour rode to meet Rustem, and, taking him by the hand, wrung it with all the strength of an elephant. The hand turned blue with the pain, but the hero did not flinch or give any sign of pain. But when in his turn he wrung the hand of Kalahour, the nails dropped from it as the leaves drop from a tree. Kalahour rode back, his hand hanging down, and said to the king, "It will be better for you to

make peace than to fight with this lion, whose strength is such that no man can stand against him. Pay this tribute, and we will make it good to you. Otherwise we are lost."

At this moment Rustem rode up. The king gave him a place at his right hand, and asked him of his welfare. Rustem, for answer, gave him the letter of Keï-Kaoüs. When the king had read the letter, his face became black as thunder. Then he said, "Carry back this answer to your master; 'You are lord of Persia, and I of Mazanderan. Be content; seek not that which is not yours. Otherwise your pride will lead you to your fall.'"

The king would have given Rustem royal gifts, robe of honor, and horses, and gold. But the hero would have none of them, but went away in anger. When he had returned to the king of Persia, he said to him, "Fear nothing, but make ready for battle. As for the warriors of this land of Mazanderan, they are nothing; I count them no better than a grain of dust."

Meanwhile the king of the magicians prepared for war. He gathered an army, horsemen and foot-soldiers and elephants, that covered the face of the earth, and approached the borders of Persia; and, on the other hand, King Kaoüs marshaled his men of war and went out to encounter him. The king himself took his place in the centre of the line of battle, and in front of all stood the great Rustem.

One of the nobles of Mazanderan came out of their line, with a great club in his hands, and approaching the Persian army, cried in a loud voice, "Who is ready to

fight with me? He should be one who is able to change water into dust."

None of the Persian nobles answered him, and King Kaoüs said, "Why is it, ye men of war, that your faces are troubled, and your tongues silent before this Genius?"

But still the nobles made no answer. Then Rustem caught the rein of his horse, and, putting the point of his lance over his shoulder, rode up to the king, and said, "Will the king give me permission to fight with this Genius?"

The king said, "The task is worthy of you, for none of the Persians dare to meet this warrior. Go and prosper!"

So Rustem set spurs to Raksh, and rode against the warrior who had challenged the Persians.

"Hear," he said, as soon as he came near, "your name is blotted out of the list of the living; for the moment is come when you shall suffer the recompense of all your misdeeds."

The warrior answered, "Boast not yourself so proudly. My sword makes mothers childless."

When Rustem heard this, he cried with a voice of thunder, "I am Rustem!" and the warrior, who had no desire to fight the champion of the world, turned his back and fled. But Rustem pursued him, and thrust at him with his lance where the belt joins the coat of mail, and pierced him through, for the armor could not turn the point of the great spear. Then he lifted him out of his saddle, and raised him up in the air, as if he were a bird which a man had run through with a spit. This

done, he dashed him down dead upon the ground, and all the nobles of Mazanderan stood astonished at the sight.

After this the two armies joined battle. The air grew dark, and the flashing of the swords and clubs flew like the lightning out of a thunder-cloud, and the mountains trembled with the cries of the combatants. Never had any living man seen so fierce a fight before.

For seven days the battle raged, and neither the one side nor the other could claim the victory. On the eighth day King Kaoüs bowed himself before God, taking his crown from his head, and prayed with his face to the ground, saying, "O Lord God, give me, I beseech Thee, the victory over the Genii who fear Thee not."

Then he set his helmet on his head, and put himself at the head of his army. First of all Rustem began the attack, charging the centre of the enemy's army. He directed his course straight to the place where the king of Mazanderan stood, surrounded with his chiefs and a great host of elephants. When the king saw the shine of his lance, he lost courage, and would have fled. But Rustem, with a cry like a lion's roar, charged him, and struck him on the girdle with his spear. The spear pierced the steel, and would have slain the king, but that by his magic art he changed himself, before the eyes of all the Persian army, into a mass of rock. Rustem stood astonished to see such a marvel.

When King Kaoüs came up with his warriors, he said to Rustem, "What is it? What ails you that you tarry here, doing nothing?"

"My lord," answered Rustem, "I charged the king

of Mazanderan, spear in hand; I struck him on the girdle, but when I thought to see him fall from his saddle, he changed himself into a rock before my eyes, and now he feels nothing that I can do."

Then King Kaoüs commanded that they should take up the rock and put it before his throne. But when the strongest men in the army came to handle the rock, or sought to draw it with cords, they could do nothing; it remained immovable. Rustem, however, without any one to help him, lifted it from the earth, and carrying it into the camp, threw it down before the king's tent, and said, "Give up these cowardly tricks and the art of magic, else I will break this rock into pieces."

When the king of Mazanderan heard this, he made himself visible, black as a thunder-cloud, with a helmet of steel upon his head, and a coat of mail upon his breast. Rustem laughed, and caught him by the hand, and brought him before the king.

"See," said he, "this lump of rock, who, for fear of the hatchet, has given himself up to me!"

When Kaoüs looked at him and observed how savage of aspect he was, with the neck and tusks of a wild boar, he saw that he was not worthy to sit upon a throne, and bade the executioner take him away and cut him in pieces. This done, he sent to the enemies' camp, and commanded that all the spoil, the king's throne, and his crown and girdle, the horses and the armor, the swords and jewels, should be gathered together. Then he called up his army, and distributed to them rewards in proportion to what they had done and suffered. After this he spent seven days in prayer, humbling himself be-

fore God, and offering up thanksgiving. On the eighth day he seated himself on his throne, and opened his treasures, and gave to all that had need. Thus he spent another seven days. On the fifteenth day, he called for wine and cups of amber and rubies, and sat for seven days on his throne, with the wine-cup in his hand.

He sent for Rustem, and said, "It is of your doing, by your strength and courage, that I have recovered my throne."

Rustem answered, "A man must do his duty. As for the honors that you would give me, I owe them all to Aulad, who has always guided me on the right way. He hopes to be made king of Mazanderan. Let the king, therefore, if it please him, invest him with the crown."

And this the king did.

The next day Kaoüs and his army set out to return to the land of Persia. When he had reached his palace, he seated himself upon his throne, and sending for Rustem, put him at his side.

Rustem said, "My lord, permit me to go back to the old man Zal, my father."

The king commanded that they should bring splendid presents for the hero. The presents were these: A throne of turquoise, adorned with rams' heads; a royal crown set about with jewels; a robe of brocade of gold, such as is worn by the king of kings; a bracelet and a chain of gold; a hundred maidens, with faces fair as the full moon, and girdles of gold; a hundred youths, whose hair was fragrant with musk; a hundred horses, caparisoned with gold and silver; a hundred mules with black hair, with

loads of brocade that came from the land of Room and from Persia. After these they brought and laid at the hero's feet a hundred purses filled with gold pieces; a cup of rubies, filled with pure musk; another cup of turquoise, filled with attar of roses; and, last of all, a letter written on pages of silk, in ink made of wine and aloes and amber and the black of lamps. By this letter the king of kings gave anew to Rustem the kingdom of the south. Then Kaoüs blessed him, and said: "May you live as long as men shall see the sun and the moon in heaven! May the great of the earth join themselves to you! May your own soul be full of modesty and tenderness!"

Rustem prostrated himself on the earth, and kissed the throne; and so took his departure.

RUSTEM AND SOHRAB

By Alfred J. Church

ONE day Rustem thought that he would hunt. So he filled his quiver with arrows, and, mounting his horse Raksh, set out for the country which borders on Tartary. As he went he came upon a plain which was covered with herds of wild asses. Rustem smiled to see them, and, pursuing them on his fleet-footed horse, killed many of them, some with his arrows, and some, first catching them with his lasso, with his club. His hunting done, he lighted a great fire of brushwood, brambles, and branches of trees; then taking a young tree to serve him for a spit, ran it through the body of one of the asses, and roasted the flesh at the fire. When it was well done, he tore it joint from joint, ate his full of it, and broke the bones for the marrow. His meal finished, he lay down to sleep, while Raksh grazed on the plain. While he slept, seven Tartar warriors came that way, and saw the tracks of Raksh, who had wandered far away from his master's camping-place. Not long afterwards they came upon him, and made haste to possess themselves of him. First they tried to throw a lasso over him, but when Raksh saw the lasso he rushed at them like a lion, struck two of them dead with two blows of his fore feet, and bit off the head of a third. Thus three of the company were dead, and the brave Raksh was not yet taken.

Nevertheless, the other four entangled him with their lassos, and, so capturing him, took him with them to the town.

When Rustem woke from his sleep, he looked about for his horse, but could find no traces of him. "How can I go," he said to himself, "carrying my quiver and my club, this heavy helmet, this sword, and this coat of mail? The Tartars will say, 'Rustem slept and some one stole his horse,' and I shall be covered with shame."

When he came near to the town of Semengan, the king and his nobles saw that it was Rustem that was approaching. The king went out to meet him, and said: "What has happened? How is it that you came on foot? Tell us how we can serve you. We are all at your bidding."

Rustem saw that they were friends, and answered: "My horse Raksh has escaped from me on this plain, without bit or reins. Find him for me, and I will reward you as is fitting. But if Raksh is not found, I will make many suffer for it."

The king said: "No one will dare to do you a wrong in this matter. Come and be my guest. Let us drive away care with the wine-cup. Anger profits nothing. It is by charming that one brings the serpent out of his hole. As for the horse Raksh, it is not possible that he should be hid, for all the world knows of him. We will look for him, and bring him to you without delay."

So Rustem put away all suspicion out of his mind, and became the guest of the king. So they sat and drank wine together, and the king waited upon him as though he were his slave.

While the hero tarried in the palace, the king's daughter, who had often heard of his prowess and courage, and of the great exploits which he had done, saw him and loved him. She was the most beautiful of maidens. Her eyebrows were arched, the two plaits of her hair like the ropes of a lasso, her lips like rubies, and she was tall as a cypress.

Rustem asked her in marriage of her father, and the king, who was glad to find so noble a husband for her, gladly listened to his suit. So the two — the maiden's name was Tehmina — were married with much rejoicing.

When the time came that Rustem must leave the king's court, — for there were grave matters that called him back to Persia, — he took an onyx bracelet that he wore upon his arm, and gave it to his wife, saying, "If God should give you a daughter, fasten this bracelet under the curls of her hair. But if you should bear a son, let him wear it on his arm, as his father has worn it."

So Rustem departed, taking his horse with him, for the king had found Raksh.

In due time Tehmina bore a son. The infant was as beautiful as the moon. When he was but a month old he had the limbs of a yearling child; at three years he learned exercises of arms; at five he was as bold as a lion; and at ten there was not a man in the whole country that dared wrestle with him. One day he went to his mother, and said, "Tell me who I am. What must I say when they ask me my father's name?"

Tehmina said, "You are the son of Rustem. Never since God made the world has there been such a warrior

as he:" and she showed him a letter from Rustem, and three rubies which he had sent for a gift. "But," she said, "King Afrasiab must know nothing of this, for he is the sworn foe of Rustem. He would kill the son because he hates the father. And besides, if your father knew to what strength and stature you are grown, he would send for you, and your mother's heart would break for grief."

Sohrab said — for that was the youth's name: "This is a story that cannot be hid. But listen to what I will do. I will put myself at the head of an innumerable army of Tartars. I will deprive King Kaoüs of his kingdom. I will set Rustem upon his throne; and, this done, I will make war against Afrasiab and possess myself of his throne. Seeing that Rustem is my father and I am his son, I will not suffer that there should be any kings in the world but he and I."

Sohrab, after he had chosen for himself a horse, having the good fortune to find one that was of the breed of Raksh, asked his grandfather to help him. "I would go," he said, "to the land of Persia, and help my father."

The king loaded him with gifts, and sent him away.

Meanwhile it was told to King Afrasiab that Sohrab was gathering an army against the king of Persia. He called his nobles and said: "Listen to me; I have a plan which shall rid us of our enemies. Rustem must not know that Sohrab is his son. The two will meet in battle, and it may be that the young lion will kill the old one. If it be so, one day we will take Sohrab by stratagem and slay him. But if Rustem, on the other hand,

should slay his son, then his heart will be eaten away with grief, and we need fear him no more."

Accordingly Afrasiab sent messengers to Sohrab with gifts and this message: "You will do well if you can conquer the land of Persia. I send you for your help such an army as is fitting. Go on, and prosper."

So Sohrab set out with his army. He came in his march to a certain stronghold that was called the White Fort, and was the chief hope of the Persians. The governor of the fort was an old man and very feeble; but in the garrison there was a very brave champion, Hedjir by name, who, when he saw the army of Sohrab approaching, rushed out to meet him. "Come to me," he said, in his pride, "and I will cut your head from your body, and give your flesh to the vultures to eat."

Sohrab smiled to hear such brave words, and charged his enemy. The two met. Hedjir struck Sohrab on the girdle with a spear, but the point did not pierce the armor. But Sohrab, reversing his spear, struck Hedjir with the shaft, and felled him from his saddle; then, leaping from his horse, stood over him, and would have cut his head from his body, but that the vanquished man begged for quarter. Sohrab granted him his life, bound him with cords, and sent him a prisoner to the king.

The old governor of the fort had a daughter, Gurdafurd by name, a very fair maiden, but as strong and brave as any warrior in the land. It troubled her greatly to see the young champion discomfited and bound, and without hesitating a moment she armed herself, hid her long hair under her helmet, and rode forth from the fort to do battle with the Tartars.

She rode in front of the army of the besiegers, and said, "Who is there among you that will come and fight with me?" None of them were willing to accept her challenge; but when Sohrab saw her he said, "Here is another wild ass for my lasso!" and hastily putting on his armor, rode out to meet her. The girl let fly a storm of arrows at him, attacking him first from one side, then from the other; and when Sohrab charged her, threw her bow over her shoulder, put her spear in rest, and galloped to meet him. Sohrab drew his spear back so far that the point was almost level with his body; then, delivering it with all his force, struck Gurdafurd on the girdle, burst the fastenings of her coat of mail, and hurled her from her saddle like a ball struck by a racquet. The girl twisted herself under her saddle, drew a sword from her girdle, and cut Sohrab's spear in half. Then she jumped again into the saddle, but turned to fly, for she had little liking for the conflict. Sohrab slackened the reins of his horse, and, galloping after her at full speed, overtook her, and catching her by the helmet, drew it from her head. Then all her long hair fell down, and the young hero knew that he had been fighting with a girl. "Well!" said he, "if the maidens of Persia fight in this fashion, the men must be notable warriors." He threw his lasso round her waist, and said, "Do not attempt to escape; but tell me, beautiful girl, why did you seek this conflict?"

The girl said, "All the army will laugh at you, if they should see my face and my hair. They will say, 'The brave Sohrab went out to fight a woman.' Let us conceal this adventure. The fort is yours, and all the soldiers

in it, and all the treasure, as soon as you shall be pleased to take possession of it."

Sohrab said, "Do not fail of your promise, and do not trust in the strength of your walls. Were they as high as the vault of heaven, my club would level them to the ground."

So they rode together to the gate of the fort, and Gurdafurd, wounded and wearied, dragged herself within. Her father received her with great joy, and said, "You have done well, my daughter. We have no cause to be ashamed of your courage and address. Thanks be to God, who has not suffered this stranger to kill you."

After this the girl mounted on the wall, and seeing Sohrab waiting beneath, said to him, "Why do you weary yourself with waiting, lord of the Tartars? Return to the place whence you came."

Sohrab said: "Treacherous one! I swear by heaven and earth that you will repent of this falsehood. Where is the treaty that you made with me, that you would deliver up the fort, with all its garrison and its treasure?"

The girl laughed, and said: "Take care; the great Rustem will soon be here, and not a man of your army will be left alive. But what a pity that such arms and such a breast as yours should be a prey for jackals! Pride yourself as you will on your strength, but yet the stupid cow will eat the grass upon your grave."

Sohrab was covered with shame to hear these mocking words. But he said, "It is too late to give battle to-day; but with dawn to-morrow we will lay the fort level with the dust." Then he shook the reins of his horse, and galloped back to the camp.

At dawn he marched against the fort with his army. But there was no one to be seen upon the walls. He rode up to the gate, and it was opened to him. But there was not a single armed man in the whole place. In fact, the governor and the garrison had departed in the night by a passage under the earth, of which no one was aware, and with them was gone the beautiful Gurdafurd. This troubled Sohrab more than anything else, for his heart was full of love for the girl, so beautiful and so brave.

Meanwhile the governor of the fort had sent a letter to King Kaoüs, telling him how there had appeared among the Tartars a mighty champion, against whom, such was the strength of his arms, no one could stand; how he had overthrown and taken prisoner their champion, and now threatened to overrun and conquer the whole land of Persia. When the king had received and read this letter he was greatly troubled, and, calling a scribe, said to him, "Sit down and write a letter to Rustem." So the scribe sat down and wrote. The letter was this: "There has appeared among the Tartars a great champion, strong as an elephant and fierce as a lion. No one can stand against him. We look to you for help. It is of your doing that our warriors hold their heads so high. Come, then, with all the speed that you can use, so soon as you shall have read this letter. Be it night or day, come at once; do not open your mouth to speak; if you have a bunch of roses in your hand do not stop to smell it, but come; for the warrior of whom I write is such that you only can meet him."

King Kaoüs sealed the letter and gave it to a warrior named Giv. At the same time he said, "Haste to Rus-

tem. Tarry not on the way; and when you are come, do not rest there for an hour. If you arrive in the night, depart again the next morning." So Giv departed, and traveled with all his speed, allowing himself neither sleep nor food. When he approached Zabulistan, the watchman said, "A warrior comes from Persia, riding like the wind." So Rustem, with his chiefs, went out to meet him. When they had greeted each other, they returned together to Rustem's palace. Giv delivered his message, and handed the king's letter, telling himself much more that he had heard about the strength and courage of this Tartar warrior. Rustem heard him with astonishment, and said, "This champion is like, you say, to the great San, my grandfather. That such a man should come from the free Persians is possible; but that he should be among those slaves the Tartars, is past belief. I have myself a child, whom the daughter of a Tartar king bore to me; but the child is a girl. This, then, that you tell me is passing strange; but for the present let us make merry."

So they made merry with the chiefs that were assembled in Rustem's palace. But after a while Giv said again: "King Kaoüs commanded me, saying, 'You must not sleep in Zabulistan; if you arrive in the night, set out again the next morning. It will go ill with us if we have to fight before Rustem comes.' It is necessary, then, great hero, that we set out in all haste for Persia."

Rustem said, "Do not trouble yourself about this matter. We must all die some day. Let us, therefore, enjoy the present. Our lips are dry, let us wet them with wine. As to this Tartar, fortune will not always be

with him. When he sees my standard, his heart will fail him."

So they sat, drinking the red wine and singing merry songs, instead of thinking of the king and his commands. The next day Rustem passed in the same fashion, and the third also. But on the fourth Giv made preparations to depart, saying to Rustem, "If we do not make haste to set out, the king will be wroth, and his anger is terrible." Rustem said, "Do not trouble yourself; no man dares to be wroth with me." Nevertheless, he bade them saddle Raksh, and set out with his companions.

When they came near the king's palace, a great company of nobles rode out to meet them, and conducted them to the king, and they paid their homage to him. But the king turned away from them in a rage. "Who is Rustem," he cried, "that he forgets his duty to me, and disobeys my commands? If I had a sword in my hand this moment, I would cut off his head, as a man cuts an orange in half. Take him, hang him up alive on gallows, and never mention his name again in my presence."

Giv answered, "Sir, will you lay hands upon Rustem?"

The king burst out again in a rage against Giv and Rustem, crying to one of his nobles, "Take these two villains and hang them alive on gallows." And he rose up from his throne in fury. The noble to whom he had spoken laid his hand upon Rustem, wishing to lead him out of the king's presence, lest Kaoüs in his rage should do him an injury. But Rustem cried out, "What a king are you! Hang this Tartar, if you can, on your gallows. Keep such things for your enemies. All the world has

bowed itself before me and Raksh, my horse. And you — you are king by my grace."

Thus speaking, he struck away the hand that the noble had laid upon him so fiercely that the man fell headlong to the ground, and he passed over his body to go from the presence of the king. And as he mounted on Raksh, he cried: "What is Kaoüs that he should deal with me in this fashion? It is God who has given me strength and victory, and not he or his army. The nobles would have given me the throne of Persia long since, but I would not receive it; I kept the right before my eyes. Verily, had I not done so, you, Kaoüs, would not be sitting upon the throne." Then he turned to the Persians that stood by, and said, "This brave Tartar will come. Look out for yourselves how you may save your lives. Me you shall see no more in the land of Persia."

The Persians were greatly troubled to hear such words; for they were sheep, and Rustem was their shepherd. So the nobles assembled, and said to each other: "The king has forgotten all gratitude and decency. Does he not remember that he owes to Rustem his throne — nay, his very life? If the gallows be Rustem's reward, what shall become of us?"

So the oldest among them came and stood before the king, and said: "O king, have you forgotten what Rustem has done for you and for this land — how he conquered Mazanderan and its king and the White Genius; how he gave you back the sight of your eyes? And now you have commanded that he should be hanged alive upon a gallows. Are these fitting words for a king?"

The king listened to the old man, and said: "You

speak well. The words of a king should be words of wisdom. Go now to Rustem, and speak good words to him, and make him forget my anger."

So the old man rode after Rustem, and many of the nobles went with him. When they had overtaken him, the old man said, "You know that the king is a wrathful man, and that in his rage he speaks hard words. But you know also that he soon repents. But now he is ashamed of what he said. And if he has offended, yet the Persians have done no wrong that you should thus desert them."

Rustem answered, "Who is the king that I should care for him? My saddle is my throne, my helmet is my crown, my corselet is my robe of state. What is the king to me but a grain of dust? Why should I fear his anger? I delivered him from prison; I gave him back his crown. And now my patience is at an end."

The old man said, "This is well. But the king and his nobles will think, 'Rustem fears this Tartar,' and they will say, 'If Rustem is afraid, what can we do but leave our country?' I pray you therefore not to turn your back upon the king, when things are in such a plight. Is it well that the Persians should become the slaves of the infidel Tartars?"

Rustem stood confounded to hear such words. "If there were fear in my heart, then I would tear my soul from my body. But you know that it is not; only the king has treated me with scorn."

But he perceived that he must yield to the old man's advice. So he went back with the nobles.

As soon as the king saw him, he leaped upon his feet, and said, "I am hard of soul, but a man must grow as

God has made him. My heart was troubled by the fear of this new enemy. I looked to you for safety, and you delayed your coming. Then I spoke in my wrath; but I have repented, and my mouth is full of dust."

Rustem said, "It is yours to command, O king, and ours to obey. You are the master, and we are your slaves. I am but as one of those who open the door for you, if indeed I am worthy to be reckoned among them. And now I come to execute your commands."

Kaoüs said, "It is well. Now let us feast. To-morrow we will prepare for war."

So Kaoüs, and Rustem, and the nobles feasted till the night had passed and the morning came.

The next day King Kaoüs and Rustem, with a great army, began their march. Now Sohrab was still at the fort from which the beautiful Gurdafurd had escaped. When the army of the Persians came in sight, the Tartars that were in the fort set up a great shout; and Sohrab hearing it, came and stood on the rampart, with Hedjir, the champion whom he had conquered and taken prisoner, by his side. "You do not see," he said, "in this great army a man with a great club who would be able to meet me in battle. There are many men, it is true; but not a single man of war. Verily I will cover the plain with their blood, as the waters cover the sea."

So saying he went down from the rampart, and called for a cup of wine. He had not a thought of fear in his heart. On the other side, the king's army pitched their tents on the plain, which they covered from side to side with their encampment.

That night Rustem went to the king, and said, "Will

the king suffer me to go out to-night without helmet or belt that I may see for myself who this champion is, and who are the warriors that follow him?"

The king said, "It is well thought of. Only be prudent, and may God have you in His keeping."

So Rustem put on the dress of a Tartar, and set out for the fort. He made his way into it, like a lion which steals on a herd of antelopes, and saw Sohrab and the chief sitting at the feast.

Now Sohrab's mother had said to Zendeh her brother, when her son was setting out for the war, "Go with Sohrab, for you know the face of Rustem; and when the time is come, you will show my son his father." So Sohrab sat at the feast, and Zendeh his uncle sat by him.

Rustem stood by the door watching the feasters, and it so chanced that Zendeh, leaving the room, saw him standing there. "Who are you?" he said; for there was not a man in the whole army of the Tartars that was his like in strength and stature.

Rustem answered him not a word, but struck him on the nape of the neck so fierce a blow that he fell down and died. There was no more feasting or fighting for Zendeh.

When Sohrab saw that Zendeh's place remained empty, he asked where he was. Some of the guests went to look for him, and found him lying dead by the door. They came and told Sohrab, who called the nobles and said to them, "We must not sleep to-night, but must spend the time in sharpening the points of our lances. The wolf has come into the fold, and, in spite of shepherds and dogs, has taken the best of our flock.

With God for my helper, I will avenge on the Persian the death of Zendeh."

When he had thus spoken he came back to his place, and cried, "Zendeh will be wanting by my side in the battle; but I am not weary of the feast."

Meanwhile Rustem went back to King Kaoüs, and told him what he had seen and done. "As for Sohrab," said he, "he has not his equal in Persia, or among the Tartars. He might have been the great warrior San, and what can I say more?"

The next day Sohrab put on his armor, and, going out of the fort, chose a steep place from which he could see the army of the Persians, and bade Hedjir come and stand by him. "Deal fairly with me," said he, "answer me true, and it shall go well with you. You shall have rewards to your heart's content. But if you deceive me, you shall lie in prison for the rest of your days."

Hedjir said, "I will tell you truly all that I can about the army of the Persians. And, indeed, why should I lie unto my lord?"

Sohrab went on, "I am going to ask you questions about the great men of the Persian army. Tell me now who they are. And first I see a tent of leopard skin, surrounded with brocade of many colors, and guarded by a hundred war-elephants. Over the tent there floats a violet flag, on which are figured the sun and the moon in gold. Whose is this tent?"

"That," said Hedjir, "is the tent of the Persian king."

"I see another tent," said Sohrab, "and the flag that flies over it has the figure of an elephant. Whose is it?"

"That is the tent of Thoüs, son of King Nereder."

"And now," Sohrab went on, "tell me whose is that tent of green? I see, sitting on a chair, a stalwart hero, with such an air, such shoulders, and such a frame as I have never seen before. Though he is sitting, yet he overtops all the warriors that are near him. And in front of him there stands a great charger, as high as the hero himself; and from the saddle there hangs a lasso. Nowhere have I seen such a man or such a horse. See his standard; it has the figure of a dragon, and on the spear-head is a lion's head."

Hedjir said to himself, "If I were to tell this young lion that this great warrior is Rustem, he would do his best to slay him. No; I will keep his name secret." So he said: "This is one of the king's allies that is newly come from China."

"But what is his name?" said Sohrab.

"I do not know," answered the other, "for I was in the fort when he came to the king."

Sohrab was greatly grieved to find no trace of Rustem. His mother had told him certain signs by which he should know the hero. He saw them all, but he could not believe his eyes. Again he asked Hedjir about the green tent, and the mighty horse, and the lasso hanging from the saddle. But Hedjir answered: "Why should I hide the truth from you? If I do not tell you the name of this warrior from China, it is because I do not know it."

"But," said Sohrab, "where is Rustem? Not a word have you said of him; and yet so great a hero could not remain concealed in the middle of a camp. You told

me that he is the chief of the army and the guardian of the provinces. Why, then, is he nowhere to be seen?"

Hedjir answered: "Perhaps he is gone to Zabulistan. It is now that they hold their feasts in the rose gardens of that land."

"This is idle," said Sohrab. "Rustem is one who will always be found in the front of the battle. Now, listen to me. If you will tell me which is Rustem, I will put you above all the people and load you with treasure. But if you hide from me what I want to know, I will cut your head from your body. Now choose between the two."

"Prince," said the other, "when you are tired of life, go out and fight with Rustem, who can kill two hundred men with one blow of his club."

Nevertheless, he thought to himself: "If I show Rustem to this young lion he will rush on him and slay him, for all his strength and vigor. After this there is not a Persian who will dare to fight with him, and he will become king of Persia. No; I will hide the truth, and if I die, I die." Then, turning to Sohrab, he said: "Why are you so angry, and why do you threaten to kill me because I do not point out Rustem to you? But after all, are you not hiding your real thought? You want to meet Rustem in battle; but I say to you, Avoid him, for surely he will bring you to naught."

Sohrab, in a rage, struck him from his horse to the ground. Then, going back to the fort, he armed himself for battle, and went out. First he charged the king's tent, and not one of the warriors of Persia dared to stand before him. He cried out to the king and said:

"Noble king, what are you doing here on the field of battle? How dare you take the lance of Kaoüs, you who never dare to fight among the warriors in the battle. Listen to me. The night that Zendeh was slain I swore a great oath that I would not leave a man, little or great, alive in Persia, and that I would hang the king of Persia alive on a gallows. Come, now, if you have a champion who dares to meet me, let him come forth!"

Not a man among the Persians took up this challenge; and the king, in great trouble, sent to Rustem, saying: "The faces of my warriors grow pale before this young Tartar, and there is not one who dares meet him in battle."

Rustem said to the messenger: "When other kings have called me, it has been sometimes to the battle and sometimes to the banquet; but King Kaoüs never calls me except to fight for him."

Nevertheless, he bade his people saddle his horse Raksh, and he put on his circlet of leopard skin and his royal girdle, and mounted, and set out for the battle, with his standard carried before him.

When he saw Sohrab, and observed how tall and stalwart he was, he cried out to him: "Come out from the line of your army, and I will come out from mine."

Sohrab rubbed his hands in delight, and rushed out, saying: "We are warriors, you and I. Do not call to your side any of the men of Persia, and there shall be no Tartar with me. You and I will fight alone. But listen: you cannot stand against me. You are tall of stature, and you have stalwart arms; but the weight of years is on you."

Rustem looked at the young man, and said: "Young man, the earth is dry and cold, but the air is sweet and warm. I have fought in many a battle; many an army have I put to flight; many a warrior and many a Genius have I slain, and never yet have I been beaten. But I should be grieved to do you any harm. Leave these Tartars and come to us. I know not a man in the whole land of Persia who has arms and shoulders such as yours."

When Rustem thus spake, the heart of Sohrab went out to him, and he said: "Come, now; I will ask you a question, and I beseech you to answer me truly. Tell me frankly who you are. Surely you are Rustem, the son of Zal?"

Rustem answered: "It is false; I am not Rustem; I am but a common man; I have neither throne, nor palace, nor crown."

When Sohrab heard this his heart was filled with despair, and he addressed himself to the combat.

The two champions chose a narrow place, and attacked each other with short spears. And when their spears had no more iron left on them — so fierce were the blows — they drew their Indian swords, and fell to work again. And when their swords were broken they used their clubs. Terrible blows they dealt each other! The armor of their horses was broken in pieces; their coats of mail were shattered. At last neither the warriors nor their horses moved more, so fierce had been their struggle. Surely this was a strange and marvelous thing! The beasts know their own young; but man in his fury cannot distinguish between his son and his enemy!

Rustem said to himself: "The battle with the White Genius was but child's play to this. Never yet have I been conquered, and now my heart fails me before this man without a name."

When the two combatants had rest awhile they renewed the battle. Rustem seized Sohrab by the belt, hoping to drag him from his saddle; but he could not move him an inch from his place. Then Sohrab took up again his great club from where it hung by the side of the saddle, and dealt Rustem a mighty blow that bruised his shoulder. The hero writhed under the agony, but was strong enough to swallow down the pain. But Sohrab saw that he had struck a timely stroke, and smiled, saying: "Warrior, you are not one who can stand against the blows of the strong. But it is your age that disables you; it is folly for the aged to match themselves with the young."

After this the two combatants parted, and Rustem chased the army of the Tartars, as a tiger rushes on his prey. When Sohrab saw this he fell, in his turn, upon the Persians, and scattered them like a flock of sheep before him.

Rustem was filled with fury at the sight, and cried: "Man of blood, why have you fallen on the Persians, like a wolf on the fold?"

Sohrab answered: "The army of the Tartars had not joined in the battle, and yet you charged it."

Rustem said: "We will fight again to-morrow, and God shall decide who of us two shall remain the conqueror."

After this they rode back each to his own army. Rus-

tem sought the presence of the king, and told him what a mighty champion this Sohrab was. "We tried all our arms against each other," he said; "the arrow, the sword, the mace, and the lasso, but it was all in vain. At last I caught him by the girdle, hoping to lift him from his saddle, as I have done many a warrior before; but the wind might as well try to drag a mountain from its place as I drag this young warrior from his seat. Nevertheless, I will meet him again to-morrow, and then we will see what is the will of God, whether he is to prevail or I."

That night Rustem said to his brother, "If I fall to-morrow in the conflict, let all my army depart from the field of battle and return to Zabulistan, to the old man Zal. Console my mother in her sorrow. Let her not bind her heart forever to the dead. I have no cause to complain of fate. Many a lion, many a warrior, many a Genius have I slain, many a fortress have I taken, and I have never been overcome. And say to Zal, my father, 'Be faithful to the king, and obey his commands.' As for me, let him remember that old and young must die."

Sohrab passed the night feasting. He said to one of his followers: "My heart goes out to that brave warrior with whom I have fought to-day. I see in him all the signs by which my mother told me I was to recognize my father, and my heart trembles. I must not fight against my father."

The man to whom he spoke said: "I have seen Rustem in battle, and his horse Raksh also I have seen; nor is the horse of this warrior unlike him. Nevertheless, he does not strike the earth with so heavy a tread."

The next day at dawn Sohrab put on his cuirass and

his helmet and armed himself, and, mounting his horse, rode into the space between the two armies. And Rustem, on the other hand, rode out to meet him.

Sobrab spoke to Rustem with a smile upon his lips. One would have thought that they had spent the night together as friends at a feast. "How have you slept?" he said. "How do you fare to-day? Why is your heart bent on battle? Put down your club and your sword. Let us sit together on the ground, and drive away our cares with the wine-cup. Wait till some one else shall come to do battle with you, but with me make a covenant of friendship, and tell me your name and your family. Surely you are Rustem, lord of Zabulistan, son of the white-haired Zal."

Rustem answered: "Young man, we are met here to fight; I will not listen to your deceitful words. No, we will do our best, you and I; and the issue is with God."

Sohrab said: "Old man, I have spoken in vain. I would have you die in your bed when your time shall come, and when these whom you have behind you shall prepare for your burial. But since you put your life in my hands, let us accomplish the purposes of God."

The two warriors then dismounted, and tying their chargers to the rocks, rushed upon each other. Many a blow they struck, till they were both covered with blood and sweat. And so they fought, without advantage to one or the other, from morning till noonday, and from noonday till the shadows began to lengthen upon the sand. At last Sohrab, leaping like a lion, seized Rustem by the girdle, lifted him from the ground, and threw him

down, his face and mouth covered with dust; and he couched upon him, as a lion couches on a wild ass that he has caught. Then he drew his dagger, and was about to cut his enemy's head from the body.

Rustem bethought him of a device by which he might save his life. "Young man," he said, "truly you know well how to manage the lasso and the club, the sword and the bow. But listen to me. Our customs of war are not as yours. If a warrior fights with another, and throws him, he does not cut his head from the body the first time; but if he throw him a second time, then he has the right to do so. This is our custom of war."

The young man believed what the old warrior said, for he was of a generous heart; and also fate would have it so. So he let Rustem go free.

After a while came one of the Tartar warriors, and asked him how he had fared in the conflict. When Sohrab told him what had happened, and what Rustem had said, the man cried: "Alas! young man, are you weary of your life? You have let the lion, whom you had caught in your snare, escape. Beware of what will happen. It was a wise man who said, 'Despise no enemy, be he ever so weak,' and think what an enemy is this!"

Sohrab was sorry to hear these words, but said: "Trouble not yourself, I shall fight again to-morrow, and you shall see the yoke upon his neck once more." So saying, he returned to the camp.

Rustem, on the other hand, when he rose from the ground, washed his face in a stream, and prayed to God to give him the victory, not knowing for what he prayed.

It is said that Rustem's strength had once been such that when he put his feet upon a rock they would sink into it, and that he had prayed to God that a part of this strength might be taken from him. But now that he found himself in such danger, and was full of the fear of Sohrab, he prayed once more that his strength might be restored to him as it was before. And again he did not know for what he prayed.

When he had washed off the dust in the stream, he came back to the place of combat, and Sohrab also, seeing him return, left the camp. But when they met, and, laying hold of each other's belts, wrestled as before, then it seemed as if Sohrab had in a moment lost all his strength. Rustem seized him by the head and arm and bent him back, and so threw him on the ground. No thought had he of waiting till he should have thrown the young man a second time; but, knowing that he would not long remain where he lay, drew his sword from its scabbard, and plunged it into his breast.

Sohrab knew that he had received his death-blow. He said to Rustem: "This is my own doing, and it is chance that has put in your hand the key of my fate. My mother told me the signs by which I should know my father, and my love for him has led me to my death. I sought to see his face, and I have sought in vain. I shall never see it; and now I die. But as for you, were you to become a fish in the sea, or a star in the sky, my father will take vengeance on you when he shall hear that I am dead."

Rustem's heart sank in him when he heard these words. "Tell me," he cried, "what marks you have of

Rustem. If this that you say be true, may his name perish forever!" And he threw himself on the ground, and tore his hair with loud cries.

Sohrab said: "If it be so, if indeed you are Rustem, then it is of your own evil soul that you have killed me. Did I not seek by every means to make peace between us? And did I find one movement of tenderness in you? But open my cuirass, and look at what you will see. When my mother heard the sound of my trumpets at the gate, she ran to meet me, her cheeks red with weeping, and fastened a bracelet of onyx to my arm, and said, 'Keep this, it is a remembrance of your father; and use it when the time is come.' But alas! the time is come too late. We have fought together, and the son is dying before the father's eyes."

When Rustem had opened the cuirass, and saw the bracelet of onyx, he tore his garments and cried out in despair, and threw dust upon his head.

But Sohrab said: "There is no remedy. It was to be and it is. What profits this grief?"

After a while he said again: "Now that I am about to die, the Tartars are in an evil case. Show, I pray you, your love for me, by hindering the king from marching against them. It was because they trusted in me, that they have invaded the land of Persia. Let them, therefore, return to their own country in peace. And there is a prisoner in the camp; I asked him about you, and he lied to me, denying the signs which I knew in my heart to be yours. Nevertheless, see that he comes to no harm. And as for me, I came like the thunder, and I go as the wind; perhaps I shall meet you in heaven."

Rustem rode back to the army. The Persians were glad to see him return alive; but when they perceived that his garments were torn and his head covered with dust, they asked him the cause. "I have slain," he said, "the noblest of sons."

Thus Sohrab died by the hand of his father.

END OF VOLUME IV